

A N E X P O S I T I O N

W I T H

Practi call Observations ;

C O N T I N U E D

Upon the Eleventh, Twelfth, Thirteenth and
Fourteenth Chapters of the Book of

J O B.

Being the summe of XXXV. Lectures, deli-
vered at *Magnus* near the Bridge, *London*.

By JOSEPH CARYL Preacher of the Word , and
Pastor of the Congregation there.

HEBREWS Chap. 12. Vers. 7, 11.

*If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons, for
what son is he whom the father chasteneth not ?*

*Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous but grievous :
Nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righte-
ousness, to them which are exercised therein.*

L O N D O N,

Printed for Thomas Sawbridge, and are to be sold at the
Golden Lyon in *Duck-lane* near *Smithfield*, 1670.

THE NATIONAL ANTHROPOLOGICAL ARCHIVES

A N

EXPOSITION

WITH

Practical Observations

CONCERNING

the History, Theory, and

Practical Application of

THE ART OF

Being a Treatise on the

Practical Application of

THE ART OF

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Practical Application of

THE ART OF

Being a Treatise on the

TO THE

CHRISTIAN READER

To those chiefly of this City, who have
been the movers, and continue the
promoters of this WORK.

Sirs,

IN this fourth part I present you with
Jobs third dispute: Eliphaz and Bil-
dad having given their judgement up-
on his case, Zophar undertakes him:
how he managed his arguments, and what
answer he received, are (according to the
measure of received light) discovered in
this expository discourse; I shall here only (by way of pre-
face) propose a question and offer my apprehensions towards
the resolution of it.

Whether Job and his friends, who were the interlo-
cutors at this conference, spake (as the holy Prophets
and other penmen of the Scriptures did) by inspiration
of God 1 Tim. 3. 16. or, as they were moved by the
Holy Ghost, 2 Pet. 1. 21.)

That the book of Job is a part (as the Apostle phraseth it,
Rom. 15. 4.) of those things, which were written afore-
time for our learning, that we through patience, and
comfort of the Scriptures, might have hope: is testified
not only by the divine grandeur and majesty of the stile, toge-
the

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ther with the intrinsecal excellency and efficacy of the matter, (in both which it declares it self a glorious beam of his wisdom, who is light and the father of lights) but also by the concurrent Testimony of, not a few, other Scriptures.

For, as the History of it (that such a man was) hath a full Prophetical testimony by Ezekiel (chap. 14. 14.) and an Apostolical one by S. James (chap. 5. 11.) Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord: So the Authenticity and Authority of it is clearly asserted by S. Paul, calling in and associating the Testimony of this Book with Davids Psalms, so that great truth that, The wisdom of this world is foolishnesse with God.

For, Though it doth not ~~make~~ a Book purely divine, because some sentence of it is quoted in Scripture (for so the Books of Aratus, Menander and Epimenides Heat ~~hem~~ Poets are) yet such a manner of quotation as the Book of Iob is honoured with, is an undoubted argument of it. while Paul quotes the writings of the Heathen, he slighteth those Heathen writers, with, As certain also of your own Poets have said, for we are also his of-spring, Act. 17. 28. And again, One of themselves, even a Prophet of their own, said, The Cretians are always lyars, evil beasts, slow-bellies, Tit. 1. 12. He makes use of what another of them said, without saying any thing at all of him, Evill communications corrupt good manners (1 Cor. 15. 33.) But when he cites this Book, he doth in the same form wherein most of the books of the old Testament are cited in the new, giving his citation the value of a reason, in reference to the point he was upon, with an emphatical causal particle, For it is written, he taketh the wise in their own craftinesse, 1 Cor. 3. 19. which are the words of Eliphaz in the 5th. chapter of this Book, ver. 13. Now, as when God took the first-fruits, he consecrated and sanctified the whole kind of which those first-fruits were a part, so where he takes any part of a Book as an authoritative Scripture proof, he confirms that whole Book for Scripture.

And

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And as this Book is there authoritatively cited by the Apostle Paul, so divers sentences and branches of it are transplanted and engrafted by the penmen of other Scriptures into the body of those Scriptures which God appointed and called them so pen: The 5 verse of the 8. Psalm, and the 3 verse of the 144. Psalm, Lord, what is man that thou takest knowledge of him, or the son of man that thou makest account of him, are fully the same in sense, and near the same in the letter with that of Job in his 7 chapter at the 17 verse: And the comparison of man to a shadow, (Psal. 144. 4.) seems to be transcribed from the words of Bildad, chap. 8. vers. 2. That also of the 107 Psalm, v. 4. He powreth contempt upon Princes, and causeth them to wander in a wildeqnosse where there is no way, fell first from the mouth of Job, chap. 12. vers. 21. 24. And the words of the forty second verse in the same Psalm, The righteous shall see it and rejoyce, and iniquity shall stop her mouth, were spoken by Eliphaz in Job 5. 16. and 22. 19. The like observations may be made between Lev. 26. 5. and Job. 11. 19, between Deut. 10. 17. and Job. 34. 19. between Psal. 7. 15. and Isa. 59. 15. compared with Job. 15. 35. Now, as the calling out of some one sentence of this Book for a Scripture proof, so the frequent mixing of the language and phrase of it in the Scripture, is a convincing argument that the whole Book is of God.

But doth not Job charge his friends as forgets of lies? chap. 12. 4. if they were so indeed, how can we assert their discourses for divine truths? For no lie is of the truth, 1 Joh. 2. 21. If they were not, how can we assert the discourse of Job for truth, who was thus mistaken? I answer.

First, Job spake rather passionately then positively.

Secondly, The lies he charged them with, were not erroneous assertions against the truth, but unkind aspersions (flowing from a zeal for God) upon his person.

Thirdly, Job doth not charge his friends with lies strictly

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taken, as if they had knowingly spoken any thing which was false, or as if they had spoken at any time purposely to ensnare him: his friends supposed and were confident that they spoke truth not only in it self (as indeed they did) but also to his state, and their aim was to instruct or reclaim him, not to ensnare or entangle him by what they had spoken.

Lastly, They spoke no doctrinal untruths though some of their applications were (as to his case) untrue.

And thus even the Apostles themselves did fail sometimes. For as Jobs friends applied their doctrine to a Saint; as if he had been an hypocrite, so did they in their Epistolical writings apply their doctrines to some hypocrites as if they had been Saints.

But hath not God himself in the conclusion and determination of this dispute say expressly to Eliphaz the Temarite, My wrath is kindled against thee and against thy two friends, for ye have not spoken of me the thing that is right as my servant Job hath (chap. 42. 7) If they did not speak right of God, how then were they taught of God what to speak answer.

First, Some expound those words (as the letter also seems to carry it) comparatively; not as if they had not spoken right of God, but not so right as Job had.

Secondly, That which they spoke of God in his nature, properties and works was all right, only they had not spoken right of God, about the intendment of his works and dispensations towards Job: They did not hit the meaning of God in that so clearly as Job did; Though (I conceive) Job himself was much in the dark about that point too, as Elihu laboured to convince him.

It may be again objected, That Job and his three friends oppose each other, and maintain different opinions, how then can all be true? Must not one side be out, he or they?

I answer. First, Job and his friends did agree in many points (as was shewed in the Preface to the second part of these Expositions) and all these principles wherein they agreed are

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the undoubted truths of God. I know it to be so of a truth
(saith he chap. 9. 2.) And again, My eye hath seen all this,
mine ear hath heard and understood it (chap. 31. 7.) In these
these passages Job rises with his friends and seats to the truth
many things which they had spoken, as if he had said though
cannot agree with you in all yet I will agree as far as I
can. In these points you and I have no quarrel
Secondly, where they disagreed the difference was not thus
do, that his friends maintained an error and he a truth, but
by thus he maintained more truth, or truth more clearly than
they did. They taught truth in all they spoke, but not all the
truth. As for instance, That God afflicteth for sin; say that sin
the cause of affliction, is a truth; but not all the truth; for
absolutely and universally true; for some afflictions are not
for chastening and correction, but merely for trial and
tribulation. Again they teach, that God doth severely
with wicked men in this life. This likewise is not univer-
sally and absolutely true; for, as some godly men are troubled,
some wicked men prosper all their days.
Thirdly, Though the opinion which Jobs friends held in op-
position to him, was not throughout sound and orthodox; yet
their way of expressing it was. Remember, I pray thee (saith
Eliphaz chap. 4. 7. Who ever perished being innocent; or
where were the righteous cut off? Here Job opposed him;
chap. 9. 22. This is one thing, therefore I said it; he do-
yeeth the perfect and the wicked. Eliphaz guided by the
experience of Gods usuall administrations in those times, held
that God doth not greatly afflict (for that he means by perishing
and cutting off) any godly man in this life. This was his mi-
stake yet the words with which this opinion is clothed contain
clear truth. And being an appeal to experience (Remember
I pray thee) are very parallel to that of David. (Psal. 37. 25.)
I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen
the righteous forsaken; nor his seed begging bread.
Fourthly, Jobs friends spoke truth in The first, or in the past.

on all along, they may be said to Hypothesi, or in the applications open all their applications and inferences might have fitted some men in such an outward condition as they saw Iob in, but they did not fit Iob, because his inward condition was not such as they conceived it to be: and God left them under those misapprehensions of his inward condition, for the promoting of his eternally design in the full trial of Iob's patience, while his friends wounded him deeper by these continual reflections upon his spiritual condition, than Satan or the Saboteurs did by the breaches and irruptions which they made upon his outward condition.

But does it not abuse the Divine Authority of this Book, if any thing in it be unduly stated and applied?

The Scripture reports many things, even of those who wrote or spake in Historically, which are against the Scripture Doctrinally. All that Moses spake was not right, for he once spake unadvisedly with his lips (Ps. 106. 33.) And so did David, when he said in his haste all men are liars, Ps. 106. 11. And again (Ps. 73. 13.) Verily I have cleansed my heart in vain, and washed my hands in innocency. The Prophet Jeremy doth not only write a curse upon his birth-day, but he curses the man who brought tidings to his father, saying, a man-child is born (Jer. 20. 14, 5.) Jonah prayed, take my life from me, when he saw that God spared the lives of the Ninevites: He also was angry for the death of a gourd, and said, I do well to be angry: even unto death (Jon. 4. 3, 9.) These things are written in Scripture for our caution, not for our imitation: And they are discoveries, not of the wisdom and holiness of God, but of the folly and sinfulness of man. Some such sad discoveries Job made in this Book, and some such his friends made.

But if some passages in this Book discover the weakness and mistakes of the speakers, how can we raise doctrines and observations from them?

Every speech and passage which the infinite wisdom of God hath

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hath thought fit to put into this or any other Book of Scripture, hath in it somewhat for our instruction. That blasphemy of the fool, which contradicts not only the truth but the very being of God (Psal. 14. 1.) The fool hath said in his heart, there is no God, teacheth us this divine truth, That there are seven (that is, all manner of) abominations in the heart of man. We may draw useful instructions from the words of Judas the Traitor, after Satan had entered into him and filled his heart; yea from the words of Satan in his temptations and proposals unto Christ; much more may we from the sayings of holy men, which are true for the matter (as all the sayings of Iob and his friends are) though there be a failing in the manner of speaking or in their reference to a particular case.

Nor is it unsafe to affirm, that even such sayings are from the inspiration of God, which have an infallible truth in them, though they who said so did not understand themselves. When the chief Priest and Pharisees sat in Council, and debated the destruction of Christ the Saviour of the world, fearing the Romans would destroy them, and take away both their name and nation, Caiphas who was high-priest that same year said unto them, ye know nothing at all; nor consider that it is expedient that one man die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not. Iob. 11. 40, 50. This was wicked and bloody counsel, according to his intentment and meaning in giving it, (for we must not condemn the innocent, though but one man, upon polittick respects to preserve the greatest multitude or a whole nation of men) yet there was a great truth of God in it, even the summe and substance of the whole Gospel; For it was not only expedient but also necessary, that one man (Iesus Christ the only Sonne of God) should be put to death, that the whole nation of the Jews, and all the Gentile nations might not perish eternally. Thus the Evangelist explains the cruell advice of Caiphas in the next words, v. 51. 52. This he spake not of himself, but being high-priest that year, he

prophecied that Christ should die for that nation, and not for that nation only, but that also he should gather together in one the children of God that were scattered abroad. This sense was far from the heart of Caiphas, though the words which bear it were uttered with his tongue. And thus if we (in some places) pass by the particular meaning of the speakers, and keep to the general meaning of what is spoken, we may make a savoury and an edifying construction of every passage in this book: in which as there are abundance of holy truths and acts were a compendium both of Law and Gospel, so (upon this account) there is no one sentence in opposing any one truth contained and held forth in either. And therefore from all these premises I conclude the question first proposed affirmatively, That Job and his friends spake by the inspiration of God, or as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.

I shall not entertain the Reader any longer at the door or in the entry of the book: but commending this brief exercitation with the following expositions to the blessing of God, for a fruitful improvement of these and all other helps, which his gracious bounty continues or renews upon us for the furtherance of our faith and knowledge in, and of our obedience to the whole mystery of his will revealed in his word, I subscribe myself

March 10.
1648.

Your affectionate Friend,

to love and serve you in the Lord,

Joseph Caryl.

AN
EXPOSITION

WITH
Practicall Observations;
CONTINUED
Upon the Eleventh, Twelfth, Thirteenth and
Fourteenth Chapters of the Book of
JOB.

JOB Chap. 11. vers. 1, 2, 3.

*Then answered Zophar the Naamathite, and said,
Should not the multitude of words be answered? and should
a man full of talk be justified?
Should thy lies make men hold their peace? and when thou
mockest, shall no man make thee ashamed?*



JOB hath already flood two charges, the first *Sophar sonus*
from Eliphaz, the second from Bildad. Here a *idem quod spe-*
third begins, *culator, & Na-*
amathites pul-

Then answered Zophar the Naamathite, and said. *chram & ju-*
cundum. Greg.

Who Zophar was, hath been shewed at the Phil.
11th verse of the second Chapter. His name Zophar imports a

B

Watchman,

Watchman, and his additionall title *Naamachie*, pleasant or beautifull in the original.

The matter of his answer may be considered,

First, In the Preface.

Secondly, In the body of it.

The *anecdotes* or *perages* is contained in the three first verses.

The body of his answer in the following parts of the Chapter : wherein three things are done :

1. A generall proposition, containing the matter in debate, or the position which *Zophar* puts upon *Job*, as his, and takes upon himself to confute, as erroneous. This he layes down in the 4th verse, *Thou hast said, My doctrine is pure, and I am clean in thine eyes.*

2. We have the confutation of this position enlarged, from the 5. verse to the 12.

3. *Zophar* having shewed *Job* his error, and, as he hoped, convinced him of it, proceeds to give him counsell, and closeth the Chapter with instruction. He insisteth in the same method and treads the same path that *Eliphaz* and *Balshan* had done before; first, chiding and reprovng *Job*, then counselling and advising him.

Zophars preface presents us with a three-fold necessity, engaging him to this reply.

*Quod verbosus
ad facandam
malam cau-
sam.*

First, From that multitude of words which *Job* had already heaped together for the colouring (as he judged it) of a bad cause, verse 2. *Should not the multitude of words be answered? and should a man full of talk be justified? Is it not high time that I should speak a little, when thou hast had time to speak so much?*

*Quod mendax
ad obstatu-
tuendam ma-
lam causam.*

Secondly, He argues this necessity from the falsity of what *Job* had spoken, in the first clause of the third verse, *Should thy lies make men hold their peace? It is thy sinne, that thou hast spoken lies, and it would be mine, if I should not speak against them.*

*Quod irrisor
ad causamuan-
das veras ad-
monitiones il-
ludendumque
Deo & homini-
bus.*

Thirdly, from the scorn and levity of spirit, which *Zophar* supposed he saw frothing at the lips of *Job*, *When thou mockest, shall no man make thee ashamed? It were the shame of all men, if none should. Thou art sitting in the corners chair, Shall I be afraid to raise thee up, or pull thee down?*

So then, The preface may be formed up into this Argument;

Many

to me and many words, and those full of lies and scorn must be
denied and answered. A man can or ought to hold his peace,
when he hears such discourses. But my answer is full of words, and as full of lies and
scorn as the words of the other.

*Paulo amaru-
lentius agit &
aculeatus.*

Coc.

Zophar Fobum
reprehendit a-
civius quam
ceteri incales-
cente ut fit in
certamine ani-
mo, ita ut à
convitiis non
abstineat. Merl

חרב רברים
Maltus verbo-
rum, i. e. ver-
bosus.

σπινθὴ λόγῳ
 νει λῶν πῦ
 σπινθὴ τοῦς λό-

γα'ς, vel potius
πρὸ τοῦ λ' γαι,
σπ' ἰσμάζω, qua-

*ſi ſemini legas
dicas, quod ſa-
ra in agris de-*

pascentur, me-
taphora ab avi-
culis sumpta,
que neque

magnopere sunt
esui, neque
camin delictant,

petro sunt mo-
lesti. Beza.

5. *Staphylococcus aureus*

1. *Admission*

Therefore I must undertake thee, I must answer,
Thou Zaphn' prelieth upon his friend with violence, if not with
violence and frowardness of spirit: handling him more roughly,
and pouring more gall and vinegar into his wounds, than his for-
mer Antagonist had done. As his spirit grew warmer, so did his
words; and in heat of arguings he comes very near unto re-
vilings.

Verse 2. Should not the multitude of words be answered?

The abundance of words in *Zophar* (xxviii 7-9), is over-copious in language, and man given so much, and desiring to hear himself speak. Eloquence of speech, or elocution, is an excellent gift of God; but verbosity, and a tedious flow out continually at the tongue, is the vanity of man's wit once, a sin in the speaker, and a burden to the hearers. *Paul* was taxed for this at *Athens*, *Ac.* 17. The *Athenians* were the great wits of the world, masters of eloquence, and when *Paul* came amongst them, they encountered him, and some said, *What will this babler, this tower of words say?* *verf.* 18. So some give the notation of the Greek word, though others, with better reason, take it, as an allusion to little birds, which pick up the seed-forn, and being of no great use, either for meat or much, are yet troublesome enough with incessant, innumerable chattering. Such are those Philosophers censured *Paul*. This man speaks many words, but he makes no much, no ear is taken with him, nor understanding enriched by him. Though all we speak is in words, yet we must speak more about words.

I shall lay down five particulars, whereby we may discern, when multitude of words are sinfull; or when there is a multitude of fine in a multitude of words: It is possible to speak many words, and all flow enough, and no sin at all in them. They are

3. When words are unprofitable, light, vain, frothy, words that have no nourishment in them, for as meat is to the palate, so are words to the ear, to the understanding. Words are like bread of giants. Some words are nothing but wind, there's

no food, no tack in them; you cannot pick one good bit out of a whole discourse. He that hath spoken one such word hath spoken too many: how much more when a multitude of them are spoken together? As it shews the noblenesse of action, to do what is worthy to be spoken of, so of elocution to speak what is worthy to be done.

2. When words are beside the matter, beside the businesse in hand; when we shoot our arrows not eying the mark, arrow after arrow; and all from the mark, this is reprovab[e]. If we speak not to the point, we speak to no purpose. Be clear to that, and the fewest words, will make the fullest answer. Be off from that, and many words make not a word of answer.

3. When there is but a little matter in a great many words, when plenty of words have a scarcity, a dearth of matter in them. Some contract (as it were) the spirits of a point into a few words, and can give you much in a little, a large matter in a narrow compasse. This is an excellent skill, though not always fit: because all are not able to apprehend what is couched and drawn up so close together; all are not able to drink spirits, but must have them infused into, and incorporated with larger discourses, and particular demonstrations. They must have line upon line, and precept upon precept, that is a multitude of lines and precepts. Yet matterlesse words are reprovab[e], how many soever they be, and the more they be, the more reprovab[e] they are, *Shall not such a multitude of words be reprov'd?*

4. A multitude of words are insfull, when they are affected; when a man delights to speak much; A man may be that to himself, which *Ezekiel* was to his hearers, as a very lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice, and can play well on an instrument (*Ezek. 33. 32.*) Such will speak often and long, not that they care to profit others, but for their own applause, or to please themselves.

5. And lastly, When we think to carry it by the multitude of words: 1. In reference unto man, to speak a man or his cause down, to over-bear him with a crowd or throng of words; Or secondly, in reference unto God (*Eccles. 5. 2.*) *Be not hasty to utter a thing before God,* or concerning God, *Why? For God is in heaven, and thou upon earth, therefore lenthby words be few.* There is an infinite distance between God and man. We are not able to comprehend, Who, or what God is, we cannot reach God,

*Cum in calo
Deus sit, i. e.
longissime à
nobis de divinis
rebus ignorari
necesse est.
Hier. in loc.*

God, and therefore we should be very careful and deliberate in speaking to and of God, or about the things of God. The Apostle (*Rom. 8. 31.*) having set forth the great mystery of the love of God to us in Christ, concludeth (as some conceive) like an Oratour, *What shall we say then to these things?* As if he had said, Here is a subject about which much might be said, but we had need be very careful how and ~~what~~ we say about it, *What shall we say to these things?* No man, no not the tongue of an Angel is sufficient to deliver and unfold these secrets: such love, such goodness are beyond words. The Moralist hath a very grave *Senec. l. 7. Nat. Quest.* and serious passage to this purpose, while he was falling upon a discourse about the heavens, stars, and superiour motions. *When we enter into our Temples, we compose our selves to reverence; we look even to our garments, that they sit comely about us; we (as it were) fashion and shape every member into an argument of modesty, in omni argumentum modestie. How much more should we do this, when we come to speak of the stars and heavens, but most of all, when we speak of the nature of the gods; (The best Heathen Catechismes speak no better) lest we speak any thing rashly, or affirm any thing that is untrue. If an Heathen was thus taken up with the thought of heavenly bodies, and stricken with a reverential awe, when he was to speak about Idol-gods, how much more ought we to come to the Apostles Stand, about the divine things of the great and only wise God? What shall we say to these things? It is good for us to avoid a multitude of words in all things, especially in things which are so high, so much above us. The Apostle admonisheth 1 Tim. 6. 20. Avoid profane and vain babblings. There may be profane and vain babblings about holy and sacred things. And that not only when we argue about them, but when we pray about them.*

This excesse Christ reproveth in the prayer of the Pharisees, *Mat. 6. 4. They think they shall be heard for their much speaking,* and that they must prevail with God for the things they desire, because they utter many words to manifest their desires. Thus to use many words in prayer is babling, not praying. And thus to use many words in preaching, is the uncomelines, if not the sinfulness of preaching.

Paul, Act 20. preached until midnight. There was a multitude of words, yet not too many words: his discourse had not one of these evil ingredients; he did not speak unprofitable things, or things beside the matter, or a little matter in many words; he did

not speak, because he affected to speak, or because he thought to carry it by speaking. Thus, to pray long, or to preach long is no fault. The greatest multitude of such words, is not one too many.

*Namquid, qui
multa loquuntur
non & audier?
Vulg.*

The Vulgar varieth from our reading, *Shall not he that speaketh much hear also?* The original will bear it: As if he had said, *Thou hast spoken a great while, wilt thou not have the patience to hear thy friend? Wilt thou have all the talk thy self? Thou hast uttered a multitude of words, be content to receive a few.* They who have spoken, should be willing to hear and receive an answer. Much speaking is then most offensive, when we will not take our turns to hear. Some will have all the discourse, all the argument themselves, and when they have spoken long, will hardly endure another to reply a little. See how God hath disposed the organs of the body: he hath given two ears, and but one tongue, which speaks thus much, That a man should be more ready to hear, then to speak; and that's the Apostle James his rule, *Chap. 1. 19. Let every man be swift to hear, and slow to speak:* not that he doth positively commend slownesse of speech, that is not his meaning; heaviness of speech is no vertue, nor any mans commendation: but he speaks comparatively, *Be swift to hear, and slow to speak;* that is, Be ye more nimble with your ears, then with your tongues; be rather willing to receive instruction, then forward to give it, rather attend the minde of others, then open your own. *There is a time to keep silence, and a time to speak, Eccles. 3. 7.* Every thing is comely in its season.

Observe, From the whole reason, That

It is a duty to answer, when which hath been spoken.

Especially, when we conceive any thing spoken against the truth. Solomons seeming contradiction asserts this duty, *Prov. 26. 4, 5. Answer not a fool according to his folly, lest thou also be like unto him. Answer a fool according to his folly, lest he be wise in his own conceit.* One rule saith, *Answer him not,* and the other saith, *Answer him.* The meaning is plain to the point in hand, *Answer not a fool according to his folly, lest thou also be like unto him,* that is, if he speak foolishly and passionately, Doe not thou answer him passionately and foolishly too, for then thou shalt be as foolish as he, thou shalt be like or equal to him; as if thy spirit and his were cast in the same mould. For the answer which a man giveth another is the measure of himself, the image of our minds.

is drawn with the tongue. But answer a fool according to his folly, lest he be wise in his own conceit, that is, if he have spoken foolishly, doe thou answer him wisely and discreetly; let thine answer be according to his folly, but in thine own wisdom. Thus to answer a fool according to his folly, is indeed to answer him contrary to his folly. Thus he must be answered, or else he is not answered: and if he have no answer, he will think that he is unanswered; that, all is oracle which he hath uttered, he will grow into proud and high conceits of himself, that surely he is a conquerour and invincible, because no man takes up the bucklers, or appears in the field against him. Therefore answer him, *Lest he (whom all that know him, know to be a fool) be wise in his own conceit. Should not the multitude of words be answered?*

And should a man full of talk be justified?

This later branch is of the same strain with the former, and what I have observed there answers both, yet I shall open the letter of the Text, and shew the elegancy of the original.

Should a man full of talk?

The Hebrew is, *A man of lips*. Mr. Broughton translates it, *shall the lips-man be justified?* He speaks of *Job*, as if he were composed and made all of lips, *When a man useth one member inordinately, he may be said to have but one member*; Denomination is given from that which is most, or acts most. Thus as he that is a great fighter, is called, *A man of his hands*: so he that is a great talker, is called, *A man of the tongue*, or *a man of lips*: as if he did by the use of all the other parts of his body to imploy his lips, were active only with his tongue. The Apostle speaking of the variety of Church-members, under the notion of a natural body, subjoyns (1 Cor. 12. 17.) *If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling?* In like manner if the whole were lip and tongue, where were the eye, where the ear? As we may be said not to have that which we use not; so to have only that, which we use too much.

Or secondly, The lips being a special instrument of speech, and a help to pronounciation, are here put for speech it self, and we explain it in our translation, *Should a man full of talk? A man of lips, is a man full of talk.* And there is a natural reason for

שפתים
Notat non lo-
quacem modo,
sed etiam fa-
cundum. Merc.

*Silabium val-
de deductum
fit, atque etiam
tenue loquaci-
tatis atque e-
loquentia fig-
num est; sicut
etiam crassiora
labia loquendi
ineptiam &
difficultatem
inducant.*

for it too. As *Physiognomists* gather conjectures from the frame of the whole body, from the lines and lineaments of the face about the habits and dispositions of the minde. So they draw arguments from the lips, whether a man be quick or slow of speech. Some mens lips have a stamp of talkativeness upon them, and others of silence. Thus we may understand that of *Moses*, *Exo. 6. 12.* When God was about to send him to *Pharaoh*, about the deliverance of *Israel* out of *Egypt*, he made many excuses, and at last falls upon this, *How shall Pharaoh hear me that am of uncircumcised lips?* But was *Moses* of uncircumcised lips? as to be of an uncircumcised heart, so to be of uncircumcised lips may intimate spiritual pollution and uncleannes. When the Prophet *Isaiah* cried out at the vision of the glory of God, *Woe is me, I am a man of unclean lips*, *Ha. 16. 5.* it is, as if he had said, I am a man of uncircumcised lips. But though *Moses* was humble enough in the acknowledgement of his own sinfulness, yet his aim was to note the unfitness of his speech, not the defiledness of his nature. For as among the Jews, uncircumcision was a sign of all the natural uncleannesses of the soul, so of some imperfections upon, or belonging to the body. Thus *Moses* called himself a man of uncircumcised lips, because he was not eloquent, but slow of speech, and slow of tongue, *Exod. 4. 10.* He was (according to the letter of the Hebrew) heavy-mouthed, or as we say, meal-mouthed; and this according to that idiom was to be of uncircumcised lips, as if *Moses* had pleaded thus, *I have not a polite and curious language to win upon Pharaoh, My tongue has not been pared and smoothed for the Court-dialect, I that have kept sheep so long, and have conversed with clowns and shepherds, How shall I speak to a King? Pharaoh useth to have accurate Oratours about him, men of lips, but I am none.* So then, according to this second sense, a man of lips is an eloquent man, a man ready, very ready and apt to speak; a man whose tongue is the pen, that is, like the pen of a ready writer.

*Crassiora habet
labia, quam ut
coram rege ex-
pedire & fa-
cunda loqui
possim: circum-
cisione, i. e. ex-
tenuatione &
expoliatione la-
biorum indi-
geo. Pined.*

Further, When *Zophar* calls *Job* a man of lips, he implieth, That *Job* had carried himself in that disposition, as if every member of his body had been a lip, or as if he had a lip in every member, that is, as if every member had spoken. According to that of *Solomon* (*Prov. 6. 13.*) *He speaketh with his feet, he teacheth with his fingers*; his carriage, his posture, his action, speak and proclaim what is in his heart, or what his minde is, *He speaketh with his feet.* When violent and passionate persons are speaking, you shall

ſhall ſee, as it were, a lip in their feet, a lip upon their hands, a lip in their eyes, a lip in their brows, a lip in their arms; that is, they ſpeak with all theſe, they move their hands at you, and their heads at you, and their eyes at you, as if all ſpoke. *These are men of lips.* *Toti voluti lingua ſunt, oculis, naſo, fronte, ore, manibus, cubitis, pedibus collo-*

Should a man of lips be juſtified?] He ſpeaks not of that great work of grace, the juſtification of a ſinner before God; to be juſtified here is to be approved, to carry the cauſe, or prevail in arguing. He that prevaiſeth in any controverſie ſhould be juſtified: *But ſhall a man of lips be juſtified?* Muſt he needs be thought to ſpeak truth, becauſe he ſpeaks much, or in greateſt weight, becauſe in greateſt number, *Shall he be juſtified?* We have the word in that ſenſe (*Pſal. 51. 4.*) *I will confeſſe, &c. that thou mighteſt be juſtified, when thou ſpeakeſt, and be clear when thou judgeſt;* That when thou ſhalt judge and pronounce ſentence upon me, thou mayeſt appear in the opinion, and eſteem of all the world to have done me right, or not to have wronged me at all, I afore-hand confeſſe my ſin, and condemn my ſelf. So we may interpret that (*Job 13. 18.*) *Behold now, I have ordered my cauſe, I know that I ſhall be juſtified,* that is, I have laid my matters ſo well, and put my buſineſſe into ſuch a fair ſtate, that I know I ſhall come off with credit, *I know I ſhall be juſtified.* And this is it which Zophar ſeems eſpecially to charge Job with, That he hoped to get the Garland, and bear all down before him with his lips, with the multitude of his words; as if he had ſaid, *Thou haſt placed thy defence in windy words, and not in ſubſtantial truths, but this noiſe, this talk will ſtand thee in little ſtead, thou ſhalt finde that the day will not be wonne with words.* *Toti voluti lingua ſunt, oculis, naſo, fronte, ore, manibus, cubitis, pedibus colloquantur. Bold. Vincet cauſa, ut neceſſario habeatur veridicus quia multiloquus?* Janſon.

Hence obſerve,

Good words cannot make a bad cauſe good.

Words ſometimes makes a good cauſe appear bad, and a bad cauſe appear good; but when the ruſhiſh maliciouſly or ignorantly caſt upon the one, and the varniſh cunningly laid upon the other, are taken off, both will appear as they are, the one as good as it is, and the other as bad as it is. *Plerumque pro differentium viribus & eloquentia potestate etiam perſpicua veritatis conditio mutatur. Min. Octavio.*

Again, *Shall a man of words be juſtified?* He that ſpeaks much may ſooner enſnare then clear himſelf. In many words there are uſually many errors. Silence ſeldome brings repentance; and it is but ſeldome that much ſpeaking calls not for much repentance. They that ſpeak much, are in danger to offend much. To be ſure, *In multiloquio non deſt precatum.*

נר He that hath nothing but words to hold him up, must needs fall.
Significat ali- You cannot blow away, either a mans assertion or objection with
quid seorsim af- your breath, but with your reason and authority.
ingere, machi-

nari, cogitare, Verse 3. *Should thy lies make men hold their peace? and when thou*
educere menda- mockest shall no man make thee ashamed?
cium e cogita-

tione ad os.

Rab. Mardoch.

Obijcit illi vi-

tiuum, quod Gra-

eci λογονομιαν,

i.e. *Famigera-*

tionem vocant

quod est falsa

ingere, & alius

narrare.

Plautus vocat

hos Geruli fi-

gulos, Ammia-

nus, Marcel.

Rami-gerilos.

We call such

Tale-bearers.

Pessimus ge-

nius hominum

qui verba gesta-

rent. Senec.

epist. 123.

Montanus red-

dit Baddim,

Nugatores:

Galli appellant

Nugatores Ba-

dains & Ba-

deaux.

ר

Est admodum

generale nomen

apud Hebr. eos,

ramum, mem-

brum, cogitatio-

nem significans

quod cogitatio-

nes in anima

sunt tanquam

rami in arbor,

huc illuc pro-

sensu. Merc.

Zophar riseth higher in language still, reproving *Job*, not only
 for the multitude, but for the falseness of his words.

Should thy lies?

The Hebrew word is of a large extent, signifying in the verb,
to frame, fashion, and form a thing out of a mans own minde, and
 so *Zophar* would fasten this upon *Job*, That the words which he
 had spoken were only shap't and wrought in his own spirit, he
 had received no such thing from God, no such thing was never ap-
 proved by God; the birth of all was but his own fleeting fancy,
 and sickly imagination. So the word is used (*Nehem. 6 8.*) *There*
are no such things done; as thou sayest, but thou feignest them out of
thine own heart; Thou wouldest put me in fear, and bear me in
 hand (saith that worthy of *Israel* to his enemy suborning false
 fears against him) that there are strange plots laid, and many ad-
 versaries combined against me: but I perceive it is thy plot to tell
 me of a plot. Thy information is but to make me afraid of that
 which is not, not to secure me from that which is. We reade of
 the moneth which *Jeroboam* had devised of his own heart, 1 King 12.
 v. 33. It is the word of the Text. Lies are framed and fashioned,
 out of our own hearts, there is the shop wherein they are
 wrought; The heart is deceitfull above all things; *A deceitfull*
heart is a fit shop to frame lies in, which are deceitfull ware. Such
Zophar supposed *Jobs* to be.

Secondly, Some reade, *Should thy toys, thy trifling discourses*
 make men hold their peace? Should thy railing, thy idle tales
 impose silence upon thy hearers?

Thirdly, The word signifies the members of the body, and the
 boughs of a tree, and by a trope the thoughts and abilities of
 the minde, which are to the minde, as limbs to the body, and as
 boughs shooting from a tree. *I will not conceal his parts,* saith
 God of *Leviathan*, Job 41. 12. that is, What mighty members
 he is made up of. Some reade the word so here, *Should thy parts be*
conceal'd, or, Should men hold their peace at thy parts? As if he
 had

had said, *Thou thinkest that thou hast mighty parts, that thou puttest forth such Leviathan-like members, such Goliath-like limbs of wit and knowledge, of judgement and eloquence, that all the host of learned men needs must be afraid and tremble to deal with thee, or accept thy challenge. The weapons of the minde are more powerfull, and sometimes more terrible then the members of the body. And ignorant or slow-witted man, is no more able to argue with one that is quick and judicious, then a childe is able to wrestle with a Giant.*

But the word is most usually taken in the sense we render it, for lies or falsehoods; So (*Isa. 44. 25.*) *He frustrateth the tokens of the liars*, namely, of those that tell lies of the stars, and say, The constellations have reported events to them, of which indeed there is not a letter written, nor a word to be spelled out of those heavenly characters. *Should thy lies make men hold their peace?*

Make men.

The word may be limited to great and wise men, *Should thy lies make wise men hold their peace?* So some restrain it here, As if Zophar had said, *Indeed thy lies may cause ignorant men to hold their peace, they may deceive the simple, and catch the weak, but should thy lies make men of parts and abilities, men of experience and understanding hold their peace?* Thus the word is used *Deut. 2. 34. Psal. 17. 14. Isa. 3. 24.* to note illustrious and wise men, men of more then an ordinary pitch and measure in dignity, or in wisdom.

וְנִחַם
Aliquando denotat viros nobiles & insignes. Coc.

Others take the word indifferently for any rank or sort of men, one or other: or as we commonly speak, for *any mortall man*. For it cometh from a root which signifies death, which is the last debt of all mankind; as the Greeks have a word for man in general noting his mortality, so have the Hebrews: because all men carry about them the ensigns or symptomes of death continually, therefore they are called *Mortals*. So here, *Should thy lies make any mortall man, or any man alive hold his peace?* Be he high or low, knowing or ignorant, I tell thee the most simple man that goes upon the ground cannot hold his peace, when thou speakest, and may well enough answer all that thou hast spoken. Thus you see the sense is heightened by the lownesse of the persons, who are supposed match enough for Job in this controversie. What,

וְנִחַם
Est generale comprehendens viros, mulieres & parvulos, hec vox (אָמָה) mors) ex eo nata videtur quod omnes finis mortis subiacent, ita d. Gracis ἀπὸ θανάτου, & a Latinis mortalis usurpatur. Mar.

thou hast argued, a woman, even the weakest among women, a childe, even a little childe, may confute and answer. We need not send for the great Rabbies and Doctours of the law to deal with thee. Who can be silent, or speak without successe? *Should thy lies make men hold their peace?*

Hold their peace?

חריש

*Obmutescere.
Solei Scriptura
per verbum si-
lendi & tacendi
reverentia ple-
sum timorem
exprimit.*

No, They should not: Should what thou hast spoken falsely be received like an oracle of truth, against which no man may open his mouth or mutter? Should it be received as some divine revelation which all must admire, none question? Must all the world of reasonable men stand mute at these thy reasonings? Hast thou any hope that thy lies shall finde such entertainment, and go off at such a rate of belief or admiration?

Holding the peace importeth greatest reverence both to speakers and actours, as also greatest worth or weight in what is spoken or done. When the Lord slew the two sons of Aaron by fire from Heaven, *Aaron held his peace*, in token of submission, *Levit. 10. 3.*

חן

*Quam vocem
Hieronymus
interjectionem
esse docet im-
pulsis silen-
tium. Vel est
imperativum
per apocopen ab
חן tacit
reverentia cau-
sa. Buxt.*

And when providential actings spake aloud the deliverance of the Jews out of *Babylon*, the Prophet like a crier in a court, commands or proclaims silence (*Zech. 2. 13. Be silent, O all flesh, before the Lord, for he is raised up out of his holy habitation.* The Hebrew word *Has* (saith one of the Anciens) is an interjection, or rather a verb of the imperative mood, enjoyning silence or inhibiting speech; we in our language use a word near that in sound, when we would have any, or all, hold their peace, we say, *Hush*: So saith the Prophet, *Hush*, not a word, *For the Lord is raised up out of his holy habitation*; his meaning is, Yeeld all reverence, respect and fear, Stand in awe, Budge not, let the wicked silence their vain boasts, and the godly their vain fears. Let neither the one or the other utter a word before the Lord.

Job describing himself in his former flourishing estate, saith, *Unto me men gave ear and waited, and kept silence at my counsel; after my words they spake not again.* (Chap. 29. 21.) that is, I was a man of so much authority and veneration, that when I spake no man would offer to speak after me, much lesse contradict what I had spoken; Thus it was once with *Job*: Now *Zophar* puts it as a matter of reproof. What? dost thou think thy words, yea thy lies

lies ſuch, as no man may examine, much leſſe gain-ſay? *Should thy lies make men hold their peace?*

Again, As holding the peace, notes reverence, ſo favour and connivence. When we are willing to let an ill word ſpoken, or a thing ill done paſſe, as if we ſaw or heard it not, we hold our peace at it. *When the children of Belial ſaid of Saul, How ſhall this man ſave us? and they deſpiſed him, and brought him no preſents,* The Text ſaith, *But he held his peace, He was as if he had been deaf,* 1 Sam. 10. 27. It is wiſdome not to ſee or hear, what we are not in a condition to redreſſe. Connivence is better then complaint, when we cannot mend our ſelves, nor reduce others. In this ſenſe we may alſo take, Holding the peace here. Should any man favour or wink at thee? Should any man be afraid to ſpeak truth, when thou ſpeakeſt lies?

Hence obſerve,

Fiſt thus, *It is a duty to vindicate, or to be an advocate for oppreſſed truth.*

Zophar ſpoke true in the generall, Lies muſt not make us hold our peace. It is a duty to plead the cauſe of truth, yea to be valiant for the truth. We muſt know no relations in truths caſe. *Socrates* is my friend, *Plato* is my friend, but truth is a better friend then both. Whoſoever dares ſpeak againſt truth, we muſt dare to ſpeak for it. 'Tis noble to ſhew our ſelves friends to truth, though we loſe friends by it, and enemies to errour, though we get enemies by it. There is a three-fold lie which we muſt not hold our peace at.

1. There is a verball lie, when a man tels a falſe tale, or bringeth up a falſe report, which is the lie of the ninth Commandment, *Thou ſhalt not bear falſe witneſſe.* Hold not thy peace at ſuch a lie.

2. There is a doctrinal lie, when a falſe poſition is averred to be the truth of God, and ſtampt with divine authority. Any erroneous Doctrine is comprehended under, and branded with this title, *A lie*; *For this cauſe* (ſaith Paul) *namely, becauſe they received not the love of the truth, God ſhall ſend them ſtrong deluſions, that they ſhall beleve a lie.* (2 Theſſ. 2. 11.) He means a doctrinal lie, all the doctrine of *that man of ſinne*, with which he hath deceived the world under the notion of truth, is but one great lie. We muſt contend earneſtly, even wreſtle for the faith once committed to the Saints againſt all thoſe lies.

3. There is a practicall lie, of which the Apostle speaks (1 Job. 2, 4, 5.) *He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his Commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him.* That is a lie, not spoken but done, when a mans actions contradict his profession, or when his works unteach what he hath taught by word. The whole life of an hypocrite is but one continued lie. The first of these is a lie told, the second is a lie taught, the third is a lie acted, and all of them are not only to be abhorred in our selves, but opposed in others. All lying is hatefull to God, being most opposite unto God, who is the true God, and the God of truth. Lying makes us like the devil, who was a liar as well as a murderer from the beginning; the devil told the first false tale, and preached the first false Doctrine; He is therefore justly called, *A liar from the beginning.* We may sometimes forbear to speak the truth, but we must never forbear to speak against a lie, whether verbal, doctrinal or practical. *Should thy lies make men hold their peace?*

יָדָה

Irriſit, ſubſannavit, balbutivit, nam ſi quos cum ſanna excipere volumus blaſphemiam eſſe fingere ſolemus ad eos ridendos. Merc.

Sanna eſt deriſio qua non fit ſimplicibus verbis, ſed geſtu. Piſc. in 1. ep. ad Cor. c. 14. 21. Quid poteſt eſſe me laugh me to ſcorn, they ſhoot out the lip, they ſhake the head; tam ridiculum, quam ſannio eſt, qui ore vultu imitandis moribus, denique corpore videtur? Cic. 1. 2. de Orat.

And when thou mockeſt ſhall no man make thee aſhamed?

This is the third charge, and it is higher then the former two: Multitude of words is ill enough; and lies are farre worſe, but to mock is worſt of all. And which is yet more, The word which is here uſed ſignifieth the worſt kinde of mocking, even that which is joyned with ſcorn and extreame deriſion: It notes mocking not only with the tongue by uncomely ſpeeches, but mocking by the eye or hand with uncivil geſtures, or by the affected mimical poſtures of the whole body; The enemies of Chriſt are ſo deſcribed in that noble prophecy (Pſal. 22. 6.) *I am a worm and no man, a reſpeach of men, and deſpiſed of the people, all they that ſee me laugh me to ſcorn, they ſhoot out the lip, they ſhake the head;* The event fulfilled this at the death of Chriſt, *Mat. 27.* Such mocking Zophar chargeth Job with; Thou doſt not only ſpeak lies, but thou ſetteſt them off with ſcornfull geſtures.

Again, This word ſignifieth not only a light jeaſt, or a merriment, but that which hath virulency, and wears a ſting; not only that which hath ridiculousneſſe in it, but that which hath cruelty in it, That's the Apoſtles Epithete (Heb. 11. 36.) *They had trial of cruel mockings.*

Thus he reſpoves Job, as if while he lay in the duſt, and was groveling on the ground, he had like a mad man caſt fire-brands,

arrows

arrows and death, or had behaved himself more like a fool in a play, then a mirror of patience, *Deceiving his neighbour, and saying, Am not I in sport?* Prov. 26. 18, 19.

There is much labour among Interpreters, to finde out what gave *Zophar* occasion to break out in so much bitterness upon *Job*. I shall touch that in the close, *When thou mockest*

Shall no man make thee ashamed?

Some render, *Shall no man confute thee?* We may put both together. Shall no man by confuting thee put thee to thame? When a confident man is thorowly answered, he is ashamed.

The word which we translate, *Make ashamed*, signifies the greatest shame, as that before did the greatest mocking. Highest thame is but a fit reward for highest scorn. Some Criticks in that language have observed, that the word is never taken, but in an ill sense, for the most shamefull shame, when a person is so ashamed that he is confounded, and dares not lift up his head, or look another in the face. The Lord saith to *Moses* in the case of *Miriam*, *If her father had but spit in her face, should she not be ashamed seven dayes?* Numb. 12. 14. The face is the table of beauty and honour, but when it is spit upon, it is made a sink of shame. God did more then spit in the face of his undutifull daughter *Miriam*, when he filled her face with the filthy spots of leprosie: *Miriam* must be greatly ashamed, when shut out of the Camp and society of *Israel* seven dayes. When *David*, over passionately lamenting the death of *Absalom*, blemished the victory of that day, and soiled the beauty of that great deliverance, the Text saith 2 Sam. 19. 3. that the souldiery went home, *as men ashamed*: Souldiers after a battel wonne are wont to come home gallantly, and in a triumph, but these victors gat them by stealth that day into the City, as people being ashamed steal away, when they flee in battel; they went sneaking, as we say, home to their dwellings, scarce a man durst lift up his head. Such a sense is here intended, Shouldst not thou be made to hold down thy head and cover thy face for shame, who hast opened thy mouth in scorn, and in discovering thy own shame?

Note from it,

First, *Scornfull gestures and mockings are the height of sinings.*

Zophar puts this in the third place, as the highest step in the gradation

כבוד
ignominioso
pudore suffunditur
dolor gravior
significat quam
כבוד quod est
in bonum aliquid
quando hoc
semper in malum.
R. D. Kimchi.
Buxtorf.
Significat enim
qui conscientia
turpitudinis hominum
oculos
fugit, ut pro-
fugasi milites,
qui sine ovatione,
taciti &
clanculo redeunt domum.
Com.

gradation of Jobs sin. There is a walking in the counsel of the ungodly, and a standing in the way of sinners, before we sit down in the chair of the scorers (Psal. 1. 1.) The Vulgar reads it, *In the chair of the malignants*. When men once arrive at scorning and mocking, they are come to the uppermost form of sinners. *The chair of mocking, is the chair of malignity*. That which is said of a woman in a peculiar sense, is true of any man in this sense, *When he hath lost his modesty, he hath nothing else to lose*. The Apostle Peter being about to shew the utmost evil of the worlds old-age or dotage in sin, saith, *There shall come in the last dayes scoffers* 2 Pet. 3. 3. There have ever been deceivers, but at last there shall come scoffers, saying, *Where is his promise of his coming? For since the Fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation*. Julian was in his time counted, and stands upon record to this day among the greatest of sinners, *An apostate from Christ*; and did not the apostasie of his heart break out chiefly at his lips? Did not the very spirit of his malignity against the Gospel of Christ, appear in mocking the Christians? When he had taken away their estates, he said, *It should not trouble you to be poor, your Master was poor*, and he said, *Blessed are the poor*. And when he had caused them to be smitten, Your Master (saith he) hath taught you, *That whosoever shall smite you on the right cheek, you must turn to him the other also*. Thus he turned the holy counsels of Christ into prophane jests. The vilest wickednesse of the Jewish state is exprest thus, *They mocked the messengers of God, and misused his Prophets* (2 Chron. 36. 16.) It is a great sin not to hear the messengers of God, not to obey the truth that is brought in his name, but to mock his messengers is the dregs of sin. When upon the ascent of Christ into heaven, many had received such an abundant inundation of the Spirit, That they spake with divers tongues the wonderfull works of God, *Some* (saith the Text) *were in doubt, saying one to another, what meaneth this? Others mocking, said, These men are full of new wine,* (Act. 2. 13.) Others mocking, &c. Mockers must stand by themselves, They are marked for wrath: We may warn all such, as the Prophet doth, *Isa. 28. 22. Now therefore be ye not mockers, lest your bands be made strong*. If God make the bands of affliction and wrath strong upon any, it will be upon mockers. They break the strongest bands of duty, therefore their bands of misery shall be stronger then they can break.

Raditus oculis eripuit Sarcasms additis, se Christianos expeditores facere ad regnum celorum, quia Galilaeus magister ipsorum dixerit, beatos esse pauperes, &c. Pezel, in Sleid.

Secondly,

Secondly, Observe.

We should not forbear to own, no not a mock and a decided truth.

Christ will be ashamed of that man, who shall be ashamed of him, and of his words in an adulterous and sinfull generation. When truth is honoured and applauded, it is easie to own it, but it is our greatest honour to own a dishonoured and a despised truth.

Thirdly, *Mockers should be put to shame.*

Yea, Mockers shall be put to shame. They who cast shame upon the truth, shall have shame cast upon themselves, they shall be buried in shame. They that lift up their heads against Christ, against the people and wayes of Christ, shall be made to hold down their heads, to hold them down for ever. *When thou mockest, shall no man make thee ashamed?* If man do not, God will.

It is here enquired, why Zophar imputes these three faults, 1. Multiloquy. 2. Lying. 3. And mocking unto Job, What occasion had the poor man given for this accusation?

For the first, nothing appears but this, which comes nothing: Job spake a little more then his friend Eliphaz, and not much more then Bildad, the discourse of Bildad is contained in one short Chapter Job lengthened out his answer in two, except this will make it out (which must be very poorly) I see not how he over-acted with his tongue, or failed in speaking too much.

For the second, Some fasten Zophars suspicion of a lie upon that in the 10th Chapter, vers. 7. *Thou knowest that I am not wicked;* As if he had obtruded that upon the knowledge of God, which was not, and therefore was not to be known.

Thirdly, He is judged mocking at the third verse of the tenth Chapter, *Is it good unto thee that thou shouldest oppress, that thou shouldest despise the work of thine hands, and shine upon the counsel of the wicked?* But besides these conjectures, Zophar himself gives the reason expressly in the next words, *For, Thou hast said, My doctrine is pure, and I am clean in thine eyes:* As if he had said, *If thou thinkest that I charge thee unjustly in saying that thou hast scattered lies, and art a mocker, I will tell thee plainly, what renders thee guilty in my thoughts, Thou hast said, My doctrine is pure, and I am clean in his sight.* But how slender a foundation this position yeelds, to support so heavy a charge (were it Job's (in terminis) in down-right words, which yet hath not appeared) I shall

clear in the opening of those words. But before I come so farre, take two or three Observations, upon the Preface in generall; as it contains this three-fold accusation already opened.

First, *That is no new thing for him that speaks truth to be counted a lier, nor for him that speaks seriously to be counted a mocker.*

It was so with Job, There were some slips of passion in Job, but no error in his opinion, and yet he is called a lier: poor Job who lay upon the dung-hill full of sores, and bodily distempers, full of sorrow and inward temptations, had little leisure to mock and jeer; his very wounds might speak his deniall of such behaviour, yet he is judged a mocker. The Apostles were sometimes counted mad men, besides themselves, and out of their wits; sometimes cunning and crafty men, who went about to out-wit others. Paul is put to his plea in that common case (1 Cor. 6. 4.) *as deceivers, yet true;* we are looked upon as a company of Mountebanks, as if our design were to cheat the people at once, of their purses, and of their souls. We are esteemed deceivers, as if we were hired to cry up an Impostour, rather then a Saviour, and to fill the world with fables, rather then solid truths; but truth of understanding is the commodity we deal in; and we deal in it with truth of heart. Again (2 Cor. 2. 17.) *We are not as many, which corrupt the word of God;* Even they who received the Word by immediate revelation, were suspected of corrupting the Word, of mixing and mingling it with their own inventions, to serve turns, or to make it comply with their own interests. But (saith he) we are no corrupters; we make not our own markers of the Word, we do not put it off for worldly advantages or gain, we only make this advantage and merchandise of it, the gaining of your soules.

Secondly, Observe,

A good man may causlessly charge those that are innocent.

As we must not at all judge a man to be wicked, who is falsly charged, so we should be very cautious how we judge a man wicked, who chargeth another falsly. This age is a charging age, The tongue and pen have made as hot charges as the sword. Lier, Heretike, Schismatike, Deceiver, Hypocrite, are the common weapons of our paper warre. It is a duty to give a meek interpretation of rigid censures, much more to be sparing in our judgments upon rigid censurers. A good man may passe an ill sentence upon

*Prima semper
irarum tela
sunt maledicta.
al.*

upon thoſe who are and do good. So did Zophar upon Job, and yet upright in the main.

Thirdly, Obſerve,

It is a dangerous thing to ſay that is a lie or falſe, which we are not able to make out for truth.

That was Zophars caſe, he could not bring both ends of Jobs ſpeech together; He ſuſpects all was nought, becauſe he could not finde what was good. Job was neither babler, nor lier, nor mocker, though Zophar thought him all theſe. We thorow the glaſſe of our own notions, and eſpecially thorow that of our own prejudices, ſee things in ſtrange colours. We ſhould look upon every thing in its own likenelle; We ſhould prove and try every thing to the bottome before we cenſure, as well as before we approve. That may be found ſerious, which at firſt weighs but light, and that a truth which we called a lie. Such caution was never more needed, nor leſſe uſed then at this day.

JOB Chap. 11. Verſ. 4, 5, 6.

For thou haſt ſaid, My doctrine is pure, and I am clean in thine eyes.

But O that God would ſpeak, and open his lips againſt thee.

And that he would ſhew thee the ſecrets of wiſdome, that they are double to that which is; Know therefore, that God exacteth of thee leſſe then thine iniquity deſerveth.

IN the three former verſes we had the Preface of Zophars ſpeech.

In this fourth, He laies down the opinion or poſition, which he oppoſeth and ſpeaks againſt in the fifth and ſixth, *Thou haſt ſaid, My doctrine is pure, and I am clean in thine eyes.* This Zophar interpreted, as carrying a ſecret accuſation, and reflection upon the juſtice of God. In ſaying, Thou art innocent, thou ſaielt, God is unrighteous. *He that (being puniſhed) acquitteth himſelf, condemneth his Judge.*

Thou hast said.

*Dicere est as-
firmare & pro-
cedere assertiva.*

Or, Thou hast confidently affirmed: The word imports more than a bare *say-so*; Thou hast strongly testified for thy self, *My doctrine is pure, and I am clean.* That's the force of *David's* infirmity (*Psal. 116. 11.*) *I said in my haste, All men are liars. I said,* is, more than a conjecture, and more than a naked affirmation, even an assertion, and a confident assertion too. So is,

Thou hast said.

If another had said it, we should sooner have believed it. A modest submission of thy doctrine to the judgement of thy superiours, or of thy friends and equals, would become thee better. We have reason to doubt thy doctrine more, because we see thy own hand writes the approbation, and thou art not only a witness, but the only witness in thy own cause.

Hence note,

When a man bears witness of himself, he laies himself open to jealousies and suspicion.

Thou hast said, My doctrine is pure, Thou shouldst have expected the testimony of another. What do thy neighbours say of thee? What do thy friends say of thee? Doe they subscribe this certificate, That thy doctrine is pure, and thy life clean? Christ holds forth a divine prerogative, when he saith (*Joh. 8. 14.*) *Though I bear record of myself, yet my record is true.* God may give testimony to himself, and Christ there speaks in reference to his Godhead, as his next words intimate, *I know whence I came, and whether I go.* It is the priviledge of God alone to be a self-witness. Hence that of Christ (*Joh. 5. 31.*) *If I bear witness of my self, my witness is not true.* How shall we pacifie and reconcile these two texts? In one Christ saith, *Though I bear record of myself, yet my record is true;* and in another, *If I bear witness of my self, my witness is not true.*

Concessio Rhetorica. Bez.

I answer first, Christ speaks either by way of concession, though I should grant thus much to you, that if I bear witness of my self, my witness is not true, yet I have further testimony (as he shews in the following verse) *There is another, beareth witness of me,* and so I can easily spare my own. Or

Secondly, If I should barely assert for my self, I give you an occasion to suspect whether my assertion be true.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, The word which we translate *truth*, is well rendred
 m, If I bear witness to my self, my witness is not valid or au-
 thenticall, for another man may bear witness to his neighbour,
 and his witness not be true, but that which satisfieth a testimony
vero humani) is when it comes from a second, or a third,
 the mouth of two or three witnesses, shall every word be established,
 ent. 19. 15.

But may we not bear witness to our selves?

In some cases we may, in most we may not, especially in
 these two.

1. When we testifie for our selves out of an ambition to com-
 mend our selves, to spread our own plumes, and to grow up in
 the applause of the world. This is pharisaicall boasting of, ra-
 ther then witness-bearing to our selves.

2. When what we say or testifie is untrue. We must not bear
 self-witness, either for or against our selves. *Zophar* suspects
 his self-witness of both these errors, as aiming at self-applause,
 and that by arrogating more to himself, then he was able to make
 out. He offends who affects to blazon himself by a worth which
 is not really his; but he that blazons himself by a worth which is not
 true, multiplies offences. Some say *they are Jews, and are not*, but
 are the Synagogue of Satan, (Revel. 2. 9.) A Jew may offend, in
 saying, he is a Jew, but he that saith he is a Jew, that is, a true
 believer (for under those old Testament terms, Gospel-profes-
 sors are exprest in the *Revelation*) and is not, that is, hath nei-
 ther the inward power, nor the outward evidence of a Saint, his
 pretended piety is double iniquity. A Jew of Satans Synagogue,
 the worst disciple of his Synagogue, *None are so bad as they, who
 seem to be good. They are twice dead, who have but a name to
 alive.* The Apostle chides those bitterly, who were Jews only
 in the letter, and in the flesh (Rom. 2. 17, 19.) Behold, thou art
 called a Jew, and restest in the law, and makest thy boast of God, and
 art confident that thou thy self art a guide of the blinde, &c. Thou
 art teachest another, teachest thou not thy self? Thou who makest
 thy boast of the law, through breaking the law, dishonourest thou God?
 To say our doctrine is pure, when it is defiled with error; to
 say our selves are clean, when we are either openly prophane, or
 secretly hypocriticall, adds to the impurity of our doctrine, and
 to the uncleanness of our lives. Most appear too too bad, but they
 are worst, who would appear better then they are.

But doe we not finde Paul more then once maintaining his own integrity? Saith he not, *I have live in all good conscience before God untill this day*, Act. 23. 1. Saith he not? *I am not mad*, most noble Festus, but *speak forth the words of truth and sobernesse*, Act. 26. 25. When we are accused and called to answer, we may say, Our doctrine is pure, when it is, and, that we are clean, when we are.

In such a case, not to testifie the truth for our selves, is near as bad, as to testifie a falshood against another. And in any case to give a wrong testimony of our selves, is worse then to give it of another. *This sinne is the greater, by how much the person against whom we sinne is nearer to us, and every man is nearest to himself.*

*Calumniatoris
hac verba sunt
non veritatem
& iustitiam
prosequuntis
Beda.
Non ita dixit
tantum dixit
nihil impium
feci. Hieron.
In eadem sen-
tentia sunt
Gregorius &
Chrysost.*

Thou hast said; And what said he? *My doctrine is pure, and I am clean in thy sight.* Divers of the Ancients upon this place challenge Zophar of slander and calumination, for fastning this report or fame upon Job. One is very angry with him, How is it possible (saith he) that Job should be imagined to rise to such a pitch of self-confidence, or to speak at such a rate of spiritual pride, when he testifies (Chap. 9. 20. *If I justify my self, mine own mouth shall condemn me; if I say I am perfect, it shall also prove me perverse.* And though Job said, *I am not wicked*, yet he said not, *I am cleane.* The difference is great between a deniall of wickednes, and a presumption of cleannes. These two cannot expound each other: He that presumes he is clean, denies he is wicked: Yet he that denies he is wicked, may be far enough from affirming, that he is clean. Such consequences have more uncharitablenes then logick in them, and can hardly expect so much charity, as to acquit them from slander.

But I dare not put an intendment of slander upon Zophars account: That's too deep, and more then can be justified. For, though Job spake not thus, in so many syllables, yet to that effect he had spoken; words had past from him, which might give, at least a colourable, pretence for such a charge. And Zophar seems (in one respect) to deal better with Job then his other friends; for he collects the matter upon which he minded to debate with him, and laieth it down in an entire proposition, This is the thing thou hast said, *My doctrine is pure and I am clean in thy sight.* When or where said he so? Some settle it upon that (Chap. 6. vers. 10.) *I have not concealed the words of the holy One*; that is,

(as these expound) I have spoken truth, and all the truth. Others put it upon that (Chap. 10. 2.) *Shew me wherefore thou contendest with me*; which hath (say they) this secret intimation in it. That Job did not see any sin in himself, and that he thought God himself could hardly shew him one, for which he contended with him. Those words also at vers. 7. of the same Chapter, *Thou knowest that I am not wicked*; are supposed an appeal to God himself to give testimony against him, if he could. *Then knowest, and I will stand to thy Judgement, that I am not wicked*. These passages Zophar might contrive to the sense given, As if he had said, *I am clean in thy sight*. And we finde Job in his following discourse (Chap. 31. 7.) speaking out plainly, *If my step hath turned out of the way, and mine heart walked after mine eyes; and if any blot hath cleaved to my hands; then let me sowe, and let another ear, &c.* If any blot hath cleaved to my hands; amounts to as much as this in the letter, *I am clean in thy sight*. And as Zophar here so Elihu taxeth him with it elsewhere (Chap. 33. 8. 9.) *Surely thou hast spoken in mine hearing, and I have heard the voice of thy words, saying, I am clean without transgression, I am innocent, neither is there iniquity in me.*

What then was faulty in Zophar?

This. He managed his discourse more like an Accuser, then a Comforter. He amplified and strained the words of Job to a sense which he intended not. He spake what might be clothed with such an interpretation; But, *Charity thinketh no evil, and love would have made a better Comment*. He never meant to raise himself upon his own innocency; or to stand upon his terms with God; How often had he disclaimed and even protested against such over-weenings? Yet his friends impose that sense upon him all along; and will make him say, what he never thought, and own what his soul abhorred.

Take one note from their mistake, and then I shall give the sense of the position more distinctly.

Words are often misconstrued, and reckoned for more then the speaker meant them.

We are apt to put unsound glosses upon the Word both of God and man. Many report the matter spoken, falsely, and very few report the meaning of the speaker truly. More quarrels and controversies arise from the mistake of words, then from difference of judgements. There is scarce a book written about

Accusatorum more amplificat, & interpretatione parum benevola, eo rem adducit ut talia censetur locus, Jobus. Sancti. Necessè est contentiosius loquaris, quod probare non possis. Quintil. Dedam. 18.

any Tenet which is opposed, but the Author is forced to a great expence of time and pains for the clearing of his meaning from the mistakes of opposites. Yea a man can hardly let a word fall in ordinary conference, but some mis-improvement is made of it. When Peter asked Christ concerning John, Lord, and what shall this man doe? Jesus saith unto him, if I will that he tarry till I come, What is that to thee? Joh. 21. 22. Then went this saying abroad among the brethren, that that Disciple should not die; Howbeit Jesus said not unto him, He shall not die, but if I will that he tarry till I come, What is that to thee? False-witnesses come against Christ, and what is their testimony? This fellow said, I am able to destroy the temple of God, and to build it in three daies, Mat. 26. 61. This was a meer mistake of the words of Christ, Joh. 2. 19. where when he was demanded by the Jews, What sign shewest thou unto us, seeing that thou doest these things? He answered, Destroy this temple, and in three daies I will raise it up. How grossly did they corrupt this Text by their exposition of it! Christ said, Destroy ye, they made it, I am able to destroy; he said, This temple; meaning his own body, They say, the materiall temple, or place of public worship: So the Jews stumbled at his words, when they fell first from his lips, as their reply telleth us, Fourty and six years was this temple in building, and wilt thou rear it up in three daies? The Evangelist explains him right in the next line, But he spake of the temple of his body. It is to be bewail'd how such misunderstandings have troubled the Church and servants of God; and that so many have suffered upon such misunderstandings. The Wiseman hath a Proverb, which reacheth this abuse, though it be not direct to the point in hand, He that covereth a transgression seeketh love, but he that repeateth a matter, separateth very friends, (Prov. 17. 9.) He aims at tale-bearers, who repeat what they hear upon design to breed jealousies, and heart-burning among friends, or, according to the language of the times, to cajole the nearest and the strongest confidants. But we may apply it to they sense before us, That usually they who repeat a matter, separate very friends, For who is it almost that repeateth the discourse of another (especially if he hath any prejudice against the party, or doth not meer fully in opinion with him) but he spoils it in repeating, and so separates very friends? This was the fault of Jobs friends, they repeated his words, but most of their repetitions were perversions or unkind Criticisimes upon, rather than charitable

rible reports of what he spake. And therefore he was forced (Chap. 23. 3.) to appeal unto God with whom he knew himself should finde candid dealing, and his words receive a genuine interpretation. *O that I knew where I might finde him, that I might come even to his seat, I would order my cause before him, and fill my mouth with arguments;* As if he had said, I have been often wronged by my friends in misconceiving what I have argued, but were I to argue and plead it with God himself, I know he would deal fairly with me, and put a right sense upon every word, he would make the best of what is not so well spoken, and nothing but good of what is well spoken. He would receive what is right, and rectifie what is amisse. Let us now examine what *Zophar* judged *Job* to have spoken amisse.

Thou hast said, My doctrine is pure, and I am clean in thy sight.

His supposed error was, that he thought his doctrine true, and this was his blot, That he thought himself clean. This thou hast said,

My doctrine is pure.

That is, I am orthodox or sound in judgement, both in my generall tenets, and in what I have particularly maintained in the present disputation concerning the providence of God in afflicting godly men, and in dispensing outward comforts to the wicked. *Thou hast said thy doctrine,* delivered upon both or either of these subjects, *is pure.*

The originall word which we render *Doctrine*, is derived from לָקַח a root which signifies *to take, or to receive.* And that upon a three-fold ground,

Accipere, doctrina dicitur ab accipiendo, i. e. discendo nam discere est accipere. Drus.

1. Because such doctrines are delivered upon the taking of mature deliberation, or gained, by taking much pains for them.

2. Because such doctrines are in their own right to be received. Sound doctrine is worthy to be received, it is worthy of all reverence and ready acceptation.

3. Because there is a power in such doctrines, to take or catch those unto whom they are spoken. *Truth is full, not only of strength, but of subtilty.* Hence some conceive that the allusion is to hunters and fowlers, who lay baits, and set traps to catch birds, or other game, So (in a good sense) a man of wisdom and under-

Metaphora sumpta a venatione. Pisc.

standing, publishing sound doctrine, laies a bait, with holy craft to ensnare and catch his auditours (*Prov. 11. 30.*) *He that winneth souls is wise*; it is this word, they who are godly and judicious catch souls, as a fowler catcheth birds: by laying out sound, wise and faithfull arguments, they take and snap men, they hold their spirits fast, till they overcome and win them, even as the snare of the fowler takes the bird; Such are wise men indeed. The whorish woman (*Prov. 7. 13, 21.*) is said, to catch or gain the simple young man (the word is the same in the original) *by her fair speech*, her taking language, *A whores doctrine is very taking, her lips drop ensnaring eloquence.* As there is a power in sinfull counsell to take and ensnare; so much more in holy and wholesome counsell. The Apostle was a Crafts-master in this soul-trade (*2 Cor. 12. 16.*) *Being crafty* (saith he) *I caught you with guile*; I plaid the cunning mate with you, I laid a snare, and set a trap, but all for your good.

Further, The word signifieth pleasure and sweetnes, noting thus much, That purity of doctrine is pleasant, and gives much delight. As meats are to the taste, so are truths to the understanding: nothing brings in greater contentment to any faculty, then a clear apprehension of the proper object. Surableness is the ground of pleasure. And the pleasures of the intellectuall part, are as much above those of the sensitive, as the understanding it self is above the senses. A *Philosopher* having found out a true and ratiounall conclusion in *Geometry*, ran about the City, where he lived, as if he had been distracted with joy, saying, *I have found it, I have found it.* When God gives, and we by study and prayer finde out the treasures of divine truth, it is as the beginning of heaven (*Mat. 13. 44.*) *The Kingdome of heaven is like unto a treasure hid in a field, the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof, goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field.* The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart, *Psal. 19. 8.* To receive pure doctrine is as much a pleasure, as it is an honour; as much the delight, as the ornament of the minde.

My doctrine is pure.

טוֹר אֱמִינִי

*Mundus purus
clarus fuit, est
lucere ad mo-
dum vitri &
cristalli.*

Pure.] The word signifies pellucid or clear, that which a man may look thorow as glasse, or to the bottom of it, as a crysell fountain. Pure doctrine is like glasse or a crysell stream, upon which

which you may not only look, but look thorow it, and to the bottome of it, and finde all clear. Such a purity is here meant, *My doctrine is pure.* Purity of doctrine imports two things.

1. The preciousnesse of doctrine, for that which is pure is precious, and every thing the more pure it is, the more precious it is in its kinde.

2. The unmixtneffe, the uncompoundednesse of doctrine, Purity is opposed to mixture; Pure is as much as simple or uncompounded; we reade of the *simplicity of the Gospel* (2 Cor. 11. vers. 3.) which is nothing else but the purity of the Gospel. The contrary whereof is corrupting or *adulterating the word of God*, by the addition of humane inventions, and our own fancies.

My doctrine is pure.] Pure in both these senses. It is precious and worth much: it is unmixed, nothing but it self. I have not feigned and coyred it out of mine own brain. I have not embased it with an Allay of inferiour metall; it is the sincere simple Word of God.

Whence note,

True doctrine is pure doctrine.

True doctrine is pure two waies. It is pure *subjectively*, and it is pure *effectively*. It is pure in it self, and purifies us, *Joh. 17. v. 17. Sanctifie them thorow thy truth, thy word is truth.* Pure doctrine will purifie. *False principles breed false practices; crooked rules make crooked lives;* That which is polluted is as apt to pollute, as that which is pure to purifie. The nature of things is stamp upon their effects. Truth is compared to the most excellent metals, and it excels them. The Apostle speaking of all sorts of doctrines built upon *Christ the foundation*, calls some gold, silver, precious stones; others, wood, hay, stubble (1 Cor. 3. 12.) The difference of doctrine is set forth under these Metaphors: Pure doctrine is gold, silver, precious stones; False doctrine is wood, hay, stubble, these are combustible matter, they will burn, they will not bear the trial; whereas the Word of God, and so the truths that are bottomed upon that, are (Psal. 12. 6.) Pure. How pure? *As silver tried in a fornace of earth, purified seven times;* that is, it is altogether pure, having not the least dross in it, *My doctrine is pure.*

And I am clean.

בר ד בר

*Mundum red-
didit, versit, po-
levit, discrevit,
elegit.*

*Hac vox cum
filium signifi-
cat, chaldaica
est, & in ea sig-
nificatione san-
sum, Pl. 2. 12.
Pro. 31. 2. re-
peritur. Pise.*

The word [*Bar*] undergoeth a three-fold interpretation among the Rabbins.

1. It signifies clean or pure. So we translate.

2. It signifies a Son or man-childe (so it is rather a Chaldee word) *Prov.* 31. 2. *Psal.* 2. 12. *Kisse the Sonne*: and from this word *Bar*, a son, it is conceived that in our Northern parts, a childe is called a *barn*; in the latin, the same word denotes a young childe, and pure or clean, and so it bears fair to the interpretation of the text: because howsoever a childe is naturally all filthy and unclean, in regard of the guilt and pollution of original sin: yet in regard of acts, a childe is clean, he is white paper, as he hath no fair letters, so no blots upon him.

3. It signifies elect, chosen or preferred before others (*Cant.* 6. 9.) *She is the only one of her mother, she is (Bar, the word of the Text, the clean one, or) the choice one of her that bare her.* But how is she called the *only one* of her mother, and yet the *choice one* of her that bare her? if there be but one, how can there be any choice? The original is, *She is the one of her mother, and such an one*, as if she had ten thousand to chuse out of, she could not chuse a better; this would be her *only* childe, her flower, how many soever she might be supposed to have. If a man who hath many children likes one more then the rest, he useth to say, *There is my only son, that's he.* One as good as can be, is a choice one, though we have no more; yet properly a choice one, is the best among many. In this sense the word is used (*Nehem.* 5. 18.) where the bill of fare for *Nehemiah* his Table is thus drawn up, *He had six choise sheep, &c.* They did not take the flock as they came, but picked the best for the Governours Table. Thus the word carries a comparative sense in it, pointing out not only one that is clean, but one elect before others for his cleanness, *I am clean.*

In thine eyes.

*Te, O Deus
judice & teste,
se bene conscio.*

That is, Thou, O God, considering, trying and judging me, I shall yet be found clean. It is an high challenge, but we are not to take it strictly; *Job* was no legal Justiciary, he sought not righteousness in the works of the Law, but thorow faith in the Messiah: He speaks here, as in other like places, one or all of these three waies.

1. In opposition to the opinion which men had of him : As if he had said, In the sight of men I am filthy and unclean, an hypocrite and wicked: my friends judge me so, but, *I am clean in thine eyes.*

2. *I am clean in thine eyes*; that is, in the general bent of my spirit, in the common tenour of my heart and life, Though I have my failings, yet my course is holy. Denomination is taken from the better and greater part.

3. *I am clean*, &c. that is, in reference to the special charge, which my friends lay upon me, they say I am an hypocrite, Lord, I am clean from that in thine eyes. Thus David (Psal. 18. 24.) *Therefore hath the Lord recompensed me according to my righteousness, according to the cleanness of my hands in his eye-sight.* The same Comment will serve Davids Text and Jobs. David was not in a contestation with the justice of God upon his own integrity, but upon a vindication of his integrity from the injustice and jealousies of men.

Hence we may observe (which is a seeming contradiction.)

No man is clean in Gods sight, Some men are clean in Gods sight.

No man is clean in Gods sight, that is, in himself or of himself, Job 14. 4. *Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?* Every man is hewen from a corrupt stock, and therefore is corrupt, *Behold the heavens are not clean in his sight,* Job 15. 15. *Ten he chargeth his angels with folly* (Chap. 4. 18.) How great then is the folly of that man, who upon his own account dischargeth himself of folly in the sight of God?

Yet a believer may say he is clean in the sight of God.

1. Clean perfectly by the grace of justification. So believers in this life are, as having no spot or wrinkle imputed to them, though many spots and wrinkles remaining on them, the cleanness of Christ is clean in the eyes of God; and that is the Saints cleanness. 'Tis theirs for their use, though not in their propriety.

2. Clean also in the sight of God through the grace of sanctification; God gives and sees, as a desire of, so an endeavour after universall, practicall cleanness in them that are justified. A believers way in this world is clean from crimes, though not from sins. *If any man say he hath no sin, truth is not in him; and if any man commit sinne, grace is not in him.* 1 Joh. 3. 8, 9. Sin lives in a clean person; but he that is clean lives not in any sinne. And

this is a cleanness in the sight of God.

In the conjunction of these two, *My doctrine is pure, and I am clean in thy sight*. We see the two heads of religion, or the two main hinges upon which all religion turneth, 1. *Purity of doctrine*. 2. *Cleanness of practice*. Holiness of life and soundness of opinion, constitute a perfect man; Here's the character of a Christian, in his compleatness. This was typified in the old Law by the *Urim* and the *Thummim* set in the breast-plate of the high Priest. *Urim* typed purity of doctrine, *Thummim*, cleanness of life. This *Moses* fitted not only the Priests of the old Testament, or the Ministers of the new, but befits every Christian; Every believer should bear this upon his breast, *Purity of doctrine, and cleanness of life*. Christ checks the Pharisees (*Mat. 23, 2, 3.*) who had the former, but not the later, they had purity of doctrine, but they wanted integrity and holiness of life: they sat in *Moses* chair, and therefore he biddeth his Disciples and the people, *That all whatsoever they had them observe, that they should observe and do, but* (saith he) *do not ye after their works*; take heed of treading in their steps: you may do their words, but not their works; why? for *they say and do not*; though they have purity of doctrine, they have not cleanness of life. It is an ill hearing and a sad spectacle, when these two are separated. When purity of doctrine, and cleanness of life appear together in one person, happy is that man; and he is a fit instrument to make others happy: but where either of these appears alone, or with its contrary, as a companion, purity of doctrine with uncleanness of life, or cleanness of life with error and unsoundness of doctrine: it is dangerous to embarke with, or come near such; for themselves are in great danger. Themselves are in an illcondition, and they are fit instruments to make others worse. Unsound doctrine frets like a canker, and an unclean life is catching like a leprosie. We are aptest to take an unsound doctrine from those whose lives are clean; and we are aptest to imitate their unclean lives, whose doctrine is sound.

From the later branch, *I am clean in thine eyes*. Note.

First, *It should not satisfy us that we are clean in the eyes of men, unless we can approve our selves to God also.*

For as not he that commendeth himself, so not he that is commended by others is approved, but whom the Lord commendeth, *2 Cor. 10. 18.* It is but cold comfort to be clean in the eye of our

our neighbours, that they give us a fair testimony ; if in the mean time our own heart condemn us. Yea what though we are (like that generation spoken of by Solomon) *Pure in our own eyes*, and have a *plaudite* in our own hearts, if we are impure in Gods eye. It is most desirable to be a *whits in the eye of God*, while we are white in his eye, we need not trouble our selves much, though we are black in the eyes of all the world. *It is a small thing with me* (saith Paul, 1 Cor. 4. 3.) *that I should be judged of you, or of mans judgement, yea I judge not my own self, but he that judgeth me is the Lord.*

Secondly, Observe,

What we are, and what we doe, is all before the eye of God.

It is a common doctrine, that God sees and takes notice of us. But as common as the doctrine is in the mouths of men, the use is rare in the hearts of men, yet there is no man so heightened in grace, but may make use of it. Christ himself made use of it, Ps. 16. 8. (The words were spoken by David his figure, and applied to Christ, Act. 2. 25.) *I fore-saw the Lord alwaies before my face.* Christ did not use this doctrine to keep or over-awe his heart from sin (he was infinitely above that), but to support his heart in suffering, as appears in the later part of the verse, *He is on my right-hand, I should not be moved.* But to us it is useful both these waies, and many other waies. The neglect of this doctrine leaves us under the neglect of many duties, and opens a gap, yea floud-gate unto every sin. Durst any mock God with out-side and bare profession, if the heart had fed upon, and thorowly digested this truth, cleanness and uncleanness, sincerity and hypocrisie are in the sight of God? How often do men flatter themselves with this vain hope, that their work is in the dark, and no eye sees them? How often doth the Church-Atheist question, like those (Job 22. 13.) *How doth God know? Can he judge thorow the dark cloud? Thick clouds are a covering to him that he seeth not, and he walketh in the circuit of heaven.* Sure he troubles not himself with what we do; And though most are ready to acknowledge in words, that God seeth them, they act as if God (like the Heathen Idols) had eyes, but could not see. It was that which Melancthon observed of the Italians, *You* (saith he) *are very zealous to believe that God is in the bread, but you walk as if you did not believe God to be in heaven.* Blessed is he that condemneth not himself by the truths which he alloweth.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, Forasmuch as the original [*bur*] signifies not only purity, but elect and chosen. Observe, *Clean and holy persons, just and upright persons, are fit for choice and election.*

Men may not choose, as God chooseth. God chooseth out of a common masse without respect to good or evil, as the motive of his election; he did not look upon mankind, and see one pure, and another impure, one clean, and another unclean, and then chuse the clean, and leave the unclean: No (Rom. 9. 11.) before Jacob and Esau were born, before they had done either good or evil, *That the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth, it was said, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated*; Gods election is not upon actions. He found them both in a like state, yet he chose Jacob. The reason of it is, Because he hath power, and a purpose to make them clean, whom he chuseth. God elects to cleanness, but he doth not elect any, because they are clean, or cleaner then others. The grace of election is not directed by, but directs and leads to the grace of sanctification. But when men go to choosing, they must not take this course, because they have not this power: when men choose, they must choose upon fore-seen, or rather present works of holiness and righteousness. They must chuse men fearing God, and hating covetousness for Magistrates. They must chuse men apt to teach, sober and blamelesse for Ministers: They who cannot make men fit, whom they have elected, must consider who are fit, and then elect them.

Zophar having laid down Jobs opinion of himself, *My doctrine is pure; and I am clean in thine eyes*, (verſ. 4.) proceeds to the confutation of it in the fifth and sixth verses, which we may give you in this argumentative form.

That person is not pure in doctrine, and clean in the sight of God, whom though God hath greatly afflicted, yet he might justly afflict more.

But though God hath greatly afflicted thee, yet he might justly afflict thee more.

Therefore thou art not pure in thy doctrine, nor clean in his sight.

The assumption is given in the close of the sixth verse, *Know therefore that God exacteth of thee lesse then thine iniquity deserueth*: and is prefac'd or led in by a wish, in the fifth verse, and part of the

the sixth, a wish that God himself would undertake Job, and dispute with him.

Verse 5. *But O that God would speak, and open his lips against thee!*

As if Zophar had said, *While I am about to speak, I almost think it will be lost labour for me to speak; yea, I think thou art beyond the speaking of any man: thou art so obdurate and hardened in thy way, so wise in thine own conceit, so stiff to thine own principles, so unyielding to those better counsels, which have already been given thee, by thy grave, learned and godly friends, that I am much (and I conceive any man would be) discouraged to argue and debate the matter further with thee. And therefore I would willingly quit my hands of this task, and leave thee to God, I would gladly be eased of this burden, and turn thee over (as a man past cure by man) to the hand of heaven. O that God would speak, and open his lips against thee!*

Or secondly, This Preface may have relation to those secret hints, yea sometimes explicate wishes of Job (declining the sentence and censure of his friends) that God and he might speak together. He only desired the Lord to abate the dreadful splendour of his Majesty, or not to clothe himself with dazzling light, and amazing glory in that congresse; And, *Then (saith he) let him speak, and I would answer*, Chap. 9. 15. Again Chap. 10. 2. *I will say unto God, Doe not condemne me, shew me wherefore thou contendest with me?* In both which passages Job seems to petition and presse the Lord for a personall treaty, in answer to which request, possibly Zophar might thus begin, *My friend Job, It falleth now to my lot to speak unto thee, but I should (with all my heart) rejoyce, if God would grant the wish which thou hast so often presented to him, even vouchsafe to speak unto thee himself. We have often heard thee appealing from earth to heaven, calling God to witnesse, that such and such is thine integrity. O that God would answer thee, and give thee a meeting! O that he would condescend so farre as to conferre immediately with thee! How glad should we be of this? and we beleve thou wouldst be as sorry, it will be little to thy ease, if God once take thee to task, thou shalt quickly finde it otherwise with thee then thou dreamest or presumest, he would soon cool these heats, and asswage the swellings of thy spirit by discovering himself in holinesse, and thy self in sinfulness. Thy crest will fall, and thy*

*Sane alter rem
habere intelli-
gere quam pu-
tas, non ita
iustus appa-
ret, ut tibi
persuades.*

courage come down as soon as ever he enters the list with thee, and doth but shew thee who he is, and what thou art. Either of these wayes the connexion lies fair, O that God would speak and open his lips against thee!

Quis dei Deum loqui.

The Hebrew is, *Who would give*, or, *O that some body would get God to speak?* The phrase is optative, including an ardent desire of obtaining; and therefore we translate nor, *Who would give?* but, *O that God!* As implying the great and instant opportunity of Zophar to speed his sute, *That God would speak and open his lips against him.*

Loquitur Deus per semetipsum, aperit vero labia cum vel hominum vel aliarum rerum opera tanquam instrumento mittitur ad aliquid manifestandum.
Aquin.

Some too critically and over-curiously distinguish between the speaking of God, and the opening of his lips. As if the one, namely speaking did import an immediate voice, when God reveals himself without the intervention of any instrument or second cause: but the opening of his lips, a mediate voice when God speaks (though in an extraordinary manner, yet) by man or angel, or any other creature, whose service he is pleased to design for such a manifestation of himself. *God can give a lip to liveless creatures, and make anything his tongue.* He that made mans mouth to speak; can make that speak which hath no mouth; And so, may be said to open his lips in whatsoever he useth to demonstrate or discover his minde to us by. But I passe this as a nicity, especially because Zophar imploring God to deal with Job immediatly, and not by the service of any creature, yet calls it, *The opening of his lips.*

Speaking and opening the lips, are the same thing under different expressions, or the later is but an exposition of the former. Opening of the lips is speaking, we speak by opening the lips; only here is an *hysteresis*, a figure frequent in Scripture, when that which is first in nature, is put last in order, for opening of the lips precedes speaking; here the method is inverted, *O that God would speak, and that he would open his lips against thee!*

O that God would speak!

כך
Non ad quemlibet sermonem, sed ad eum qui in iudicio habetur vel ad disceptationem spectat. Bold.

The word carries more then common talking, it is here restrained to speech in judgement, or to an exact discussion of the cause preceding judgement. Such is the meaning of that heavenly summons (*Psul. 50. 7. Hear, O my people, and I will speak* (I will debate the matter, and plead with thee) *O Israel, I will resist against thee.* Zophar prays for a day of trial, for a little day

day of judgement, *O that God would speak.*

And open his lips.

To open the lips implieth grave and deliberate speaking. The Hebraisme is very frequent, *Psal 78.2. I will open my mouth in est sapienter & a parable.* Parables are sententious speeches, speeches filled with weight of wisdom. To open the mouth in a parable is to have an active intension of the spirit, preparing and fitting the mouth to open. The mouth of a wise man is under custody, least the treasures of his minde should steal out, or be stolne out unobserved. *Precious things are not left open, they are under lock and key.* He is a wise man that keeps a lock and a key at his lips. The lock of silence, and the key of speech; or the key of discretion to shut and open the lock according to the true occasions of speech and silence. *David prayeth, Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth, and keep the door of my lips* *Psal. 141. 3.* as we should desire the Lord to keep or watch the door of our lips, least we speak sinfully, so we should keep or watch our own lips, that we may speak fruitfully and seasonably. The Scribe which is instructed to the Kingdome of heaven, is like unto a man which is an housholder, bringing forth out of his treasure things both new and old (*Mat. 13. 52.*) He hath a store, a stock of knowledge laid up there, and he openeth not his mouth, or vents it, till occasion speaks. That counsell *Prov. 22. 17, 18.* fully reacheth this Hebraisme of opening the mouth. *Bow down thine ear, and hear the words of the wise; (what to do?) And apply thine heart unto my knowledge; (let thine heart draw in knowledge)* Let it be as a bed, or a repository for the words of the wise to rest on, or be laid up in; for, *it is a pleasant thing (ther's the treasure) if thou keep them within thee, they shall withall be fitted in thy lips; if thou keep them within thee; As if he had said, When thou hast been a learner, and hast gained a stock of knowledge, then, they shall be fitted to thy lips, that is, thy lips shall bring forth, shape and form those notions of truth into profitable and savoury discourses; They shall be fitted to thy lips.* Some speak the words of wisdom, but such words are not fitted to their lips. It is (as the Proverb teacheth) *The Ass to the harp, or the Cat to the lute.* Words must be seated in the heart before they are fitted to the lips. *David's mouth did not speak of wisdom, till the meditation of his heart had been of understanding. Out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaketh, both good and*

*Aperire labia
est sapienter &
cum pondere
loqui; quasi
thesaurus esset
in corde, cujus
& labia sine
velut ostium
sub clavis vel
sigillo; &c.
Bold.*

evil. And as a good man speaks evil, so an evil man speaks good unhandſomely, becauſe it is not in, nor with his heart.

*Sincerus eris
ſi in ſimplici
ſandi notionis
ſumatur hoc
verbum, quaſi
Jobi ſimplici-
tatis ſimplex
Dei loquela op-
ponatur, ut hac
illa ſacillime
confundi dicat.*

Further, To open the lips is no more in ordinary acceptation, then to ſpeak plainly; and then it ſtands in oppoſition to thoſe eloquent orations, which (as Zophar ſuppoſed) Job had ſtudied to defend and ſecure himſelf againſt God; as if he had ſaid, If God would but open his lips, and ſpeak unto thee: one plain word might be enough to overthrow all the curious diſcourſes and ſet ſpeeches, enough to answer, and cut the ſinews of all the fine ſpun orations, and cunning ſophiſtry which thou haſt uſed in this cauſe. Let God ariſe (ſaith Moſes) and his enemies ſhall be ſcattered. Let God open his lips, ſaith Zophar, and thy mouth ſhall be ſtopp.

Thirdly, The words may carry a redargution of Job, as a man whom God did ſo farre neglect, that he would not afford him a word; As if his friend Zophar had thus reproved him, Thou haſt been calling upon God to ſpeak, and ſhew thee why he contendeth with thee, yet thou haſt not prevailed in thy ſure, he vouchſa ſeth thee never a word, but leaves thee ſtill to us. This (ſome conceive) hath a reproof in it, conſidering the times wherein Job lived; for then it was no very ſtrange thing (though it was an high favour) for God himſelf to ſpeak to the Saints his ſpecial favourites. God at ſundry times, and in divers manners, ſpoke in time paſt unto the Fathers by the Prophets Heb. 1. 1. And as he ſpoke by the Prophets, ſo he ſpoke by himſelf; God ſpoke nine times unto Abraham; as you may obſerve upon diligent reading from Gen. 12. to 22. He ſpoke alſo to others of the Ancients. And when God reſuſed to open his lips and ſpeak to Saul. How pitifully doth he complain, I am ſore diſtreſſed for the Philiftines make warre upon me, and God is departed from me, and answereth me no more, neither by Prophets, nor by dreams 1 Sam. 28. 15. Saul took it not only as his diſparagement, but as his undoing, that God reſuſed him conference. This reſuſal (according to the preſent interpretation) Zophar laies in Jobs diſh, Thou haſt praied that God would manifeſt himſelf to thee, and that is an honour which he hath done to many of his ſervants, in the Catalogue of whom thou writeſt thy name, and preſendſt thy ſelf for one, but he bearkenſ not unto thee, though I wiſh he would. O that God would ſpeak, and open his lips againſt thee!

But what is the manner of Gods ſpeaking, and how doth he open his lips?

His verbis habita persona & temporis ratione non leviter pungitur Job. Bold.

Gen. 12. 1, 7.
13. c. 15. 1. c. 17
1. c. 18. 1. c. 21.
22. & 22. 1. 11.

It is an allusion unto men. Man is not able to understand the way of a spirit, but by what is common to man. A spirit hath no lips to open, nor any instruments of speech. And to speak strictly. A spirit doth not speak at all. God is said to speak.

First, When by his mighty power he forms and frames a voice, *Formatas & which is audible and perceptible by the ear, as unto Samuel, The Deo sensibiles* Lord called Samuel, Samuel, and at last Samuel answers, *Externas voces negare videtur.* Speak, *Basil in* Lord, for thy servant heareth. *IIa. c. 7.*

Secondly, God spake to Moses, Face to face, that is, familiarly and clearly. This was the highest degree of revelation, and drew nearest to that which the Saints shall have in glory. *Quod non ausim admittere.*

Thirdly, He spake also by many signs; especially by Urim Bold, and by Thummim.

Fourthly, God spake when he intimated or hinted his minde to the spirit of man, by the instinct of his own Spirit. Most of the Prophets heard only an inward word, which is called, *The coming of the word of the Lord unto them.* As God only speaks to the heart, while the word soundeth in the ear: So he often speaks to the heart, when the ear hears no sound. *I will hear what God the Lord will speak; for he will speak peace unto his people, and to his Saints.* Ps. 85. 8. God speaks peace when he sends or gives peace, that is, all good things. God speaks peace also, when he (as it were) by a secret Echo, returns a word of assurance to the petitioners heart, that he will give peace. When Zophar wilthes, that God would speak, he means it of speaking by audible voice, or face to face, not by signs or secret intimations.

Zophar being thus instant, That God would speak, and open his lips against Job, teacheth us,

First, *Some men are beyond the conviction of man.*

O that God would speak. We say of a sick man, whose disease is desperate, as in the plague, &c. *The Lord look upon you, the Physicians have given you over, they can doe no more, we leave you to the prayers of the faithfull, and to the compassions of God.* Some in spirituall distempers are so extreemly diseased, that the soul Physitian can do nothing upon them; they are past all his medicines and preparations, these we give up to the cure of God, who raiseth the dead, and calleth those things which are not, as if they were: I grant, that whatsoever healing or cure is wrought upon the soul of man by men, is from the Lord. *Man and man stand upon even ground; Humane reason and humane reason are equal; and he*

that ſpeaks is often upon a lower ground (though he ſtand higher) then he to whom he ſpeaks, and is ſometimes weaker in humane reaſon: Now that which overcometh and convinceth, muſt have an advantage, and come in power, elſe there can be no victory. An equall (in all points) cannot be a conquerour. Hence when the Prophets delivered their meſſages, they put Gods authority to the word, *Thus ſaith the Lord*: They knew all they ſpake could prevail nothing. But though God give the effect of mans word to every man, yet ſome men appear more untractable and unteachable by the Miniſtery of man then others, they ſit under it, & (poſſibly) have ſate under it long, yet nothing's done, their mindes are as blinde, their wils as ſtubborn, their waies as crooked as ever. Man is not any thing in the converſion of any man without God 1 Cor. c. 3. v. 7. but ſome we referre wholly to God, having ſpent much ſtrength and time upon them in vain. Some men have out-ſtood, and are the reproach of all the praiers and tears, of all the counſels and admonitions of man, What can we do more or leſſe then give up ſuch (as neer loſt men) to the work of God? *O that God would ſpeak.*

Secondly, Obſerve, which Z'phar chiefly intends.

That if God once open his lips, and deal with a ſoul, he will quickly bring down his ſpirit and convince him.

Man cannot hold out againſt the ſpeakings of God. Man is not able to withſtand the immediate, nor the mediate ſpeakings of God, 1 Cor. 10. 4. *The weapons of our warfare are mighty through God*, it is our warfare, but the conqueſt is from God. When he cloathes the word with his own power, and bids it go in his might, the ſtrongest holds of ignorance and unbelief, of obſtinacy and rebellion fall to the ground, like the firſt ripe figs ſhaken with the winde. When the unlearned or idiot comes into the aſſembly of the Saints, *He is convinced of all, and is judged of all; for the ſecrets of his heart are made manifeſt, and ſo falling down on his face, he will worſhip God*, 1 Cor. 14. 24, 25. What wrought this ſudden change? Was it the power of men? No, *He will report that God is in you of a truth*. The man perceived God was there, and upon that apprehenſion his heart was ſubdued, he ſals down on his face and worſhips. When God works, the work is done. He works for us, and none can hinder; He works in us, and we cannot hinder. The arm of grace in the word of God is invincible. *O that God would ſpeak.*

Verſe 6. *And that he would ſhew thee the ſecrets of wiſdom, &c.*

As if he had ſaid, 'Tis but reaſon that I ſhould call God to ſpeak unto thee, for the ſecrets and depths of wiſdom are hidden from and above our reaſon. The natural man perceiveth not any thing of God, and the ſpiritual man may be yet unable to perceive many of the things of God. O that God would ſhew thee the ſecrets of wiſdom.

Zophar ſeems to meet with Job's ſeeming boaſt, that he was one of Gods familiars, and well acquainted with his will. The conſideration riſeth thus, Thou haſt carried it as if thou wert of the caſual council in heaven, as if thou haſt ſtood at Gods ſide, when he gave his orders and diſpatches concerning the affairs and motions of the whole world, thou takeſt upon thee, as if thou wert the favourite of the great King, and kneweſt his heart; But if God ſpeak to thee indeed, he will ſhew thee other manner of ſecrets than thou art yet acquainted with, thou ſhalt at once ſee that thou miſtakeſt much, and knoweſt little.

O that he would ſhew thee the ſecrets.

Or, The hidden things of wiſdom. Here we have Zophar's arguments diſtinct from his two friends. He deals with Job, not ſo much to convince him of his own ſinfulneſſe, as of the myſterious ſeſſe of divine wiſdom. Thou complaineſt and crieſt out of the hand of God, of thy great afflictions: I tell thee there is a ſecret of wiſdom in this diſpenſation, I will plead no other juſtification of Gods proceedings, but only this, God is infinite in wiſdom, ſo that God would ſhew thee the ſecrets of wiſdom.

Every word, and all the works of God are full of wiſdom, and yet many of them are ſo plain and eaſie, that he that runs may read them. So plain and eaſie, that an Adonibezek may run, yea all and read them *Judg. 1. 7.* As I have done, ſo God hath requited me. There was no myſtery at all in that. Senſe and reaſon have their leſſons, as well as grace and faith. But as there are ſome leſſons eaſie enough for ſenſe, ſo there are not a few hard enough for faith. And as ſome ſins of men are plain, very full, yet very plain, while other ſins lie cloſe in the heart, and are not only an iniquity, but a myſtery of iniquity, or iniquity wrapt up in a myſtery (the whole body of Antichriſtian iniquity is a myſtery) ſo ſome leſſons of wiſdom are plain, full of

Videtur Job impingere quafi illi abſtruſam Dei ſapientiam ſe aſſequi ſet. Marc.

*ועתה יתברר חכמתך
Præcipua argu-
disputationis
Zopharis hac
eſt, multa ho-
minibus non
patere, deque
his Deum in
controverſiam
non debere vo-
cari. Coc.*

*Sunt quadam
abyssi de qui-
bus disputare,
quas scrutari,
est seipsum pra-
cipitare. Sanct.
Erudita insci-
tia est, non sci-
re velle, quae
magister maxi-
mum nos vo-
luit nescire.*

of wisdom, and full of plainness, we may read wisdom upon the very letter of some words, and in the face of some works of God, while other lessons of wisdom are hard, so hard to be understood, that none can unriddle the meaning of them. And in this the Lord maintaineth his own honour, and keepeth state; he will not have all he doth, or all he speaks lie leuell to every apprehension, or to be a Text for every mans interpretation; he hath some knotty enigmas and obscure riddles to exercise the holiest wits, the highest parts, the choicest gifts of his people, yea and their patience too: they must stand waiting and expecting, yea admiring and wondering what God meaneth. 'Tis learned nonsense willingly not to know, what God is unwilling we should know. They are as good schollars who endeavour not to learn what he is not pleased to teach them, as they who have learned what he teacheth them. Though his secrets be with those that fear him, yet we must fear to be among his secrets.

The secrets of wisdom here specially meant, are (I conceive) the secrets of providence: That's the subject upon which the dispute runs: God in his actings toward mankind, hath many reserves in his own brest and bosome, which no man is able, or should adventure to give any reason or account of, besides the estate and meer good pleasure of his own good will.

Once more, *O that he would shew thee the secrets of wisdom*, is, as if *Zophar* had said, Thou judgest upon the outside, thou dwellest in the bark and rinde of divine dispensations, Thou canst not look into their heart, God alone can shew that to thee. The word which we translate [*Shew*] signifies to interpret and expound that which is dark, mysteribus and ænigmaticall.

Hence observe,

First; Wisdom is a secret, or hath a secret in it.

1. Then it is precious. That which is very common may be very good (as air and water) but it cannot bear any great price.
2. Then wisdom must be sought for, and sought with diligence; *If thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures.* Prov. 2. 4. Wisdom lies deep, as the veins of gold and silver in the earth. *Wisdom is to be sought as silver.* Silver is not to be had upon the surface of the earth, there you may finde pibbles and flints, but if you would have silver, you must dig and mine for it. Secrets are not seen at first sight, nor found out upon the first search.

search; we must enquire and enquire, look and look; enquire and look often, and long for the secrets of wisdom. We may buy gold too dear, and be at more charge to seek for silver, then the silver will be worth when it is found. But we cannot buy wisdom too dear, and the least vein of divine secrets, which we finde, will not only bear all our charges in the search but enrich us also.

Again, The word is in the plural, *Or has God would shew thee the secrets of wisdom.* Hence note,

There are many secrets in wisdom.

The Apostle (*Eph. 3. 10.*) speaks of the manifold wisdom of God. His wisdom is full of variety, it is of many sorts and forms, of many folds and plights. The wisdom of God is simple and uncompounded, it is pure and unmixed with any thing but it self, yet it is manifold in degrees, kindes and administrations, *There are secrets of wisdom;* when you have learned one secret, there are more to be learned. As there is not only a secret, but secrets, many secrets of iniquity lie in the heart of man; we may go from one room of the heart unto another (as the Prophet *Ezekiel* was carried from one place to another about the house of the Lord, *Chap. 8.*) to see greater and greater abominations. Thus you may go from secret to secret, from one secret of wisdom to another, and when you have seen both, there are yet greater secrets to be seen, besides those which shall never be seen. Some works of wisdom are unsearchable, and past finding out; they are also innumerable and past reckoning up. Some things are called secrets, because they can hardly be known, other things are called secrets, because they cannot at all be known. A third sort are so secret, that it is our sin to attempt, yea to desire to know them. All the secrets of wisdom are in God, yet some belong unto us; and they are called secrets, not because they are not at all revealed, but because they are obscurely revealed. Some secrets in God belong to God alone. And they are called secrets, because they are not at all revealed. That's the meaning of *Moses*, *Deut. 29. 29. Secret things belong unto the Lord our God, but things revealed us, and our children for ever.*

Thirdly, The special secrets of wisdom here spoken of, being seated in providence, Observe

The works of God are full of secret wisdom.

As there are mysteries in the Word, so in the works of God; There are mysteries in the work of redemption; the whole

Gospel is a mystery. *The great mystery of godlineſſe*, 1 Tim. 3. 16. Now as the work of redemption is full of mysteries, ſo are the works of providence. How many hath God poſed and put to a ſtand to read and pick out the meaning of his providential motions? why he afflieth this man, why he prospereth that, why affairs go ſometimes forward, and why at any time backward, why the deliverance of the Church proceeds no faſter, and why deliverance makes ſo many ſtops and ſtands, why ſuch instruments are laid aſide, and ſuch employed, theſe poſe and gravel the underſtanding of man: nor can we give any account of them till we go into the Sanctuary, and inform our ſelves from the oracle of the Word about the order of the works of God.

Fourthly, Obſerve, *God only can ſhew and teach us effectually the ſecret wiſdom of his works and of his word.*

As we learned from the former claule, That a word of Gods ſpeaking humbles the ſoul: ſo here we learn, That a word of Gods ſpeaking enlightens the ſoul. God is the revealer of ſecrets, *There is a God in heaven* (ſaith Daniel, chap. 2. 28.) *that revealeth ſecrets.* I cannot interpret the Kings dream, or ſpell the meaning of it, but there is one in heaven that can, his name is the *revealer of ſecrets.* If he ſhew them, we ſhall ſurely ſee them. *Thou haſt corrected me* (ſaith repenting Ephraim) *and I was corrected;* and if God inſtruct us, we ſhall be inſtructed. The dulleſt Scholar cannot but learn, if God vouchſafe to be his Tutor. *He that made the underſtanding can make us underſtand.* This is one of the articles of the new Covenant, Heb 8. 11. *In thoſe daies I will put my laws into their minds, and write them in their hearts, and they ſhall not teach every man his neighbour, ſaying. Know the Lord, for all ſhall know me from the leaſt to the greateſt:* God himſelf hath undertaken to be our teacher; though we are unapt, dull and indocible, yet, he hath promiſed to be at the pains to teach us. His teaching doth not acquit us from our attendance upon the teaching of man, but aſſures us that he will teach his, if man doth not: and that while man teacheth, he will make that teaching effectual and ſucceſſfull. When he gives us the candle or light of his Spirit to read his Word by, we read and underſtand. And unleſſe he give us the candle or light of his Spirit to read his works by, we cannot reade them with underſtanding. We are as ignorant in the book of the creatures, as in the book of Scripture, untill
God

God instruct us, and if he instruct us, we prove knowing in both. *What I do (saith Christ, Joh. 13. 7) thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter:* and what was the date of this hereafter? Even the day of the spirits operation in him. *We have an unction (as the beloved Disciple writes, 1 Joh. 2. 20.) from the holy one, and ye know all things.* When the anointing teacheth we have a qualified, a most raised omniscience. He knows all things (in this sense) who knows as much as concerns him to know. And except the anointing teacheth us, we know never a letter, either of what God hath written, or of what he is doing as we ought to know. His antient people the Jews (*Psal. 106. 7.*) *understood not his works;* and he reproveth them by the Stork in the heavens, by the Turtle, Crane, and Swallow, by all the Fowls of the air, as more learned and sagacious in his works and providences, than the men of Israel. *The stork in the heavens knoweth her appointed times, and the turtle and the crane, and the swallow observe the time of their coming, but my people know not the judgement of the Lord (Jer. 8. 7.)* My people do not understand when it is winter, and when it is summer, when it is a season of mercy, and when of judgement. Some are sick, their bodies are smitten, others are poor, their estates are smitten; a third sort are disgraced, their names are imitted, but they have neither ears to hear, nor hearts to understand unto his day. How senseless are thousands at this day about the great things which God is doing among us? He works terrible things in righteousness, but few learn either the righteousness of their own waies, or the righteousness of Gods waies. Few learn either what God hath done, or what themselves ought to do. O that God would teach such the secrets of his wisdom.

That they are double to that which is.

The word *double*, is not here taken arithmetically or strictly, as noting just *two for one*; but by *double* is meant much or manifold, a certain excess being put for an uncertain; it is frequent in the language of Scripture to call those things which exceed much, *Double*, and but *double*, though they exceed very much, though they exceed seven fold, yea an hundred fold, *Isa. 40. 2.* *Speak comfortably to Jerusalem, &c. for she hath received of the Lords hand double for all her sins.* But doth it sure the goodness of God, or is sparing mercy to punish his people much for sin, or double to their sin? Doth not *Zophar* in this verse argue *Job* into pati-

Double
Dualis numeri
proprie signifi-
cat duplicem.
Lingua sancta
mot est ad du-
plicia vocato
qua aliquis
dignitate, vir-
tute, aut ou-
mero excellens
sicut apud lati-
nos res huius-
modi Decima-
na vocari so-
lent.

ence, and redargue his impatience, by telling him, That God exacted of him leſſe then his iniquity deſerved, and did he exact of Jeruſalem double for all her iniquities?

I answer, God is ſo farre from exacting double of his people for ſin in a way of ſatisfaction, that he taketh nothing of them, not a peny of them upon that account. Chriſt is the only pay-maſter for believers to the juſtice of God, and he hath paid double, yea an hundred fold in ſufficiency, for all their ſins. When the Church receives double, it is double, that is full chaſtiſement for all her ſins, but ſhe makes no payment for any one of her ſins. So double deſtruction threatned upon the enemy is full deſtruction (Jer. 17. 18.) And when the Church is promiſed double honour for her ſhame, Iſa. 61. 7. and double liberty for her reſtraint and imprisonment (Zach. 9. 14.) The Prophets give her aſſurance of complete honour and perfect liberty.

Again, The word *double* is put alſo for that which is in any kinde choice and excellent. The burying place which *Abraham* bought of *Ephron*, is called (from this word) the *Cave of Mampehah*; that is, ſay ſome, a double Cave, one for men, another for women, one within another; or as others, a fair, beautiful Cave, to which ſenſe the words of the children of *Heſh*, at the ſixth verſe, ſeem to lead us. In the choice of our ſepulchres bury thy dead. That which is beſt or moſt is double at leaſt, Thus the ſecrets of God, being very excellent, are double.

To that which is.

The word which we tranſlate, *that which is*, beareth a very various ſenſe, and ſo renders the text very difficult.

Fiſt, It ſignifies a law or rule preſcribed to live and walk by: Hence ſome tranſlate, *They are double according to the law.* Or that he would ſhew thee, that his law is double, or that there is a great deal more in the law, then thou apprehendeſt. Some reſtrain this to the law given *Noah*. The ſeven precepts whereof are famous among the ancient traditions of the Jews. The fiſt whereof forbade the worſhip of ſtrange gods. The ſecond commanded to bleſſe the name of the true God. The third prohibited the ſhedding of innocents blood, The fourth was againſt the deſilements of filthy liſts. The fiſth againſt theft. The ſixth concerned judgement and juſtice. The ſeventh ſaid, *Thou ſhalt not pull a member from a living creature, and eat it.*

In ſpelunca duplici, i.e. excellenti pulchra & oximia. Bold.

Secundum legem. Pag.
Et quod multiplex eſſet lex eorum. Vulg.
Intellige legem Noa datam.
Hugo Grot in loc.

But we need not reduce Zophars text to these straits; but enlarge it to the whole revealed will of God, which is often called the Law of God. The Hebrew particle affixed noteth a relation, *Double according to, or, by the measure of the law.* As if he had said, Thou hast narrow thoughts of God, and of his secret wisdom in afflicting thee, but according to law thy afflictions might be doubled upon thee, God might make his little finger heavier then his loins have been. To this sense Mr. Broughton translates, *And that thou shouldst have double by justice.*

*Duplici tibi
conveniens, i.e.
duplo majora
supplicia quam
patiaris, juxta
aquitatis nor-
mam. Merc.*

Hence observe,

There is more righteousness in the Law of God, then man is able to comprehend.

As there is more mercy in the Gospel then we are able to comprehend (no man ever saw into the depths of that mercy) so there is more holiness in the law then we are able to comprehend. No man ever saw into the depths of that righteousness. There is an infinite holiness in the law (*Psal. 119. 96.*) *I have seen an end of all perfection, but thy commandment is exceeding broad;* He speaks not in the concrete, I have seen an end of perfect things, but in the abstract, *An end of perfection, and of all perfection;* I have come to the out-side or to the very bottom of all (a man may soon travell thorow all the perfections that are in the world, and either see their end, or see that they most end) *But thy commandment is exceeding broad;* that is, it is exceedingly broader then any of these perfections; I cannot see the end of it, and I know it shall never have an end. There is a vastness of purity and spiritualness in the law. Some narrow it up into a small compass, The Pharisees of old with their poor impure spirits and grosse imaginations, straightned the Law into their model, and made it very narrow: They thought no man brake the Law; which saith, *Thou shalt doe no murder*, but he that cut his brothers throat; That no man brake the Law that forbiddeth adultery; but he that actually defiled his neighbours wife, &c. But when Christ opened the mysteries of the Law, he shewed secrets of wisdom there. His doctrine assureth, That a lustfull thought is a violation of that commandment, *Thou shalt not commit adultery;* That an angry thought is a breach of that Commandment, *Thou shalt not kill.* Thus the Law is of a vast compass. *I* (saith Paul) *was once alive without the law* (Rom. 7. 9.) *I thought my self a brave man, I was some body;* my conscience never troubled me, I

knew

knew not my disease, while the Law stood aloof off, and I was without the Law. (Not that *Paul* had not the Law both written in his heart, and in his book: for as a Pharisee he was bred up among the Commentatours of the Law) but he was without it, or, he was but at the out-side of it (though I give it not for the proper meaning of the place, yet in that sense also) he was without the Law, he had not travelled thorow the length and breadth of it: *But* (saith he) *when the commandments came*, when it came in the spiritualnesse of it, and I saw in some measure what holinesse was couched there, I was then in a woefull condition, I saw my self a lost man, then sinne revived, and I died, and (verse 13.) *Sin by the commandments became exceeding sinfull*; that is, When the Commandment was cleared to me, then I saw that I was extreame sinfull, or felt the violent motions of my sin. My sin being discovered by that light, began to spit out its venome, either provoking me with fresh and unwearied assaults to commit it, or terrifying and vexing me for what I had committed. There is a multiplicity of purities in the Law, reaching the multiplicity of impurities and sinfull imaginations in us. The Law of God doth, though the laws of men do not, nor can, take notice of, and descend to the least *Items* and *punctilio's*. A man cannot so much as go a hairs-breadth beyond that which is right, but the Law is upon his back; a man cannot have a wry thought, but the Law meets with it; and a godly man (who is spirituall, and hath a new nature in him) seldome hath a wrong thought, but he takes himself tardy in it, and findes somewhat in that holy, and righteous will of God, by which he can charge himself a sinner. Whereas, they that are carnall and ignorant of the Law, can run on in a thousand sins, and never tell themselves of one, nor will they be convinced, when another tels them. *A godly man hath a preacher in his own bosome*; if he do but step aside, or do amisse, somewhat within will shew him a rule, and bring him a light to take measure of, and see his failings by. *He* (as the Apostle hath it, (1 Cor. 10. 6.) *hath in a readinesse to revenge every disobedience*. He findes a weapon ready to his hand in the magazin of the word of God, to avenge every disobedience of his heart; if but a vain thought arise; he hath somewhat ready to check it; such is the variety and largenesse of the Law, that it discovers and controuls every aberracion. *If God shew a soul the secrets of wisdom in the glasse of the law*. He must confesse that it is double to all he

knew

*Divinæ legis
multiplicatio in
eo consistit, quod
ad minima
quaque se ex-
tendit. Aquin.
Lex Dei curat
de minimis.*

knew before, from the light of nature, or from the dictates of humane reason.

Secondly, The word ſignifies an inward law, as well as an outward, yea the height and ſpirit, the extractions and quinteſſence of reaſon come under this notion. There is a reaſon, a preſcript of reaſon in God. He aſteth by a rule within himſelf, his righteous will is his rule. He gives us a law to regulate our wills, but his own will is his law. We need give no other reaſon, that what he hath done is right, but this, that he hath done ſo. We have received one law from the minde of God, but there are infinite laws in the minde of God. Thus the ſenſe runs very clear, *O that God would ſhew thee the ſecrets of wiſdom, that they are double (to what thou thinkeſt) according to the internall, eternall movings and thoughts of his own heart.* Hence Davids holy rapture (*Pſal. 49. Bold. v. 5.*) *Many, O Lord my God, are thy wonderfull works, and thy thoughts which are to us ward, they cannot be reckoned up in order to thee; If I would declare and ſpeak of them, they are more then can be numbred.* The works of God toward his people are many and wonderfull, but his thoughts are more. The thoughts of God are the eternall purpoſes of his heart. He doth not think and then reſolve, but his thoughts are his reſolutions. His thoughts ſtand, he never loſt, or laid aſide any one of them.

We tranſlate, *That they are double to that which is:* The word ſignifieth being, or the exiſtence of a thing; and ſo others render, *O that he would ſhew thee the ſecrets of wiſdom, that they are double to thoſe things which exiſt;* As if he had ſaid, The Lord hath revealed and made many things apparent, but the things which appear not are farre more then thoſe which do appear; the ſecret wiſdom of God exceeds what he hath revealed, he aſſiſteth thee according to what he hath revealed, but he might aſſiſt thee more, if he ſhould proceed with thee according to the height of his ſecret wiſdom. Hence obſerve,

That the wiſdom of God which appeareth to us, is not half, or ſo but little in compariſon of that which is in God.

The Lord hath not brought forth all the treaſures of his wiſdom; he hath not ſtamped all his wiſdom upon any thing which he hath done, no nor upon any thing which he hath ſpoken: It is not poſſible that a finite nature ſhould receive the whole impreſſion of an infinite wiſdom. Our receipts are but drops, he hath an ocean of wiſdom in himſelf. We are narrow-mouthed veſſels, we take

*Præſcriptum
rationis quod
ſiqui oportet in
paris interrogan-
dis Rab. Levi.
Infinita ſunt
in mente Dei
leges, rationes,
& modi quibus
vivitur in mor-
taliſm regimi-
ne; Qui ſenſu
leniſſimus*

*Duple major
eſt illi quæ exi-
ſtunt. Item
non Tu ſolus
complacuit
omnes circumſ-
tantiæ
Dei ejus ſa-
pientiam & ju-
ſtitiam, qua
duple i. e. mul-
to major & il-
luſtrior eſt
quam nobis vi-
deatur, vel ma-
gis capere
poſſit.*

take in by little and little. We are vessels of a small and narrow gage, when we have taken in all we can, we have taken in but little. God gives us more then we receive, and he hath more then he hath given. As the secrets of sin in man are double to those which appear, no man ever sinned out all the sinfullnesse of his heart. Though thousands have brought forth abundance, though they have acted many abominations, yet as *Solomon* speaks, There are still *seven abominations in their hearts*. Monsters and prodigies of wickednes lie in those dens and dark chambers, which the world never saw. Now as the secrets of sin in man are double to those which appear: so much more are the secrets of wisdom in God. The great God of heaven and earth hath a stock, a store of wisdom by him, which no creature ever saw or looked into, or is indeed capable of. No man, but the *Man-Christ*, hath known so much as is possible to be known of God, and most of God is impossible to be known by man. We should be ashamed, that we know no more of what is revealed. And we should adore what is not revealed to our knowledge. The wisdom of God is divided into secret and revealed; mans portion is in things revealed; Gods portion is in secret things; God hath reserved a farre greater portion for himself then he hath given unto man; that which will serve man will not serve the Lord, his portion is as much above mans as himself is above man. This *Zophar* layes before *Job*, that he might convince and humble him. Why dost thou cavil or fret thy self thorow with impatience, at what God doth, seeing thou canst not sound the reason of what he doth? thou hast not fathomed God, thou hast not reported all that God is, or hath, *The secrets of wisdom are double to that which is.*

His next words are an inference upon, or the use of this doctrine.

Know therefore that God exacteth of thee lesse then thine iniquity deserves.

Thus he applies what he had spoken in generall. God hath secrets of wisdom, and they are double, What then? I infer this upon it, *Know therefore (O Job) that God exacteth of thee lesse then thine iniquity deserves.*

Observe from *Zophars* method,

That truths are to be applied and brought home to the conscience of the bearer, or to the businesse under debate.

Possibly

Possibly Job might not have known the meaning of Zophars discourse; That God hath secrets of wisdom, and that the secret wisdom of God is double to his revealed; he might be to seek what use to make of this: Therefore (saith he) know (here is the application) God exacteth of thee less then thine iniquity deserves.

Exacteth of thee.

The Hebrew *Nashab*, signifies to forget, to lend, and to exact what is lent; and from this fruitfulness of the originall, there arise sundry interpretations of the Text. Many take the former sense, as *Nashab* signifies to forget, and they differ yet much in giving the meaning of the whole sentence.

First thus. *Know therefore that God maketh or causeth thee to forget thine iniquity*; as if he had said; There is infinite wisdom in God, and if he should break forth upon thee in the full lustre of his holines, and make thee remember all thy sins, thou wouldst be swallowed up in the gulf of thy own sinfulness. As no man can see the face of God and live, it is so glorious; so a sinner cannot see his own face and live, it is so odious. As God in condescension to our weaknes, shews us but the *back-parts* of his glorious self, so but the *back-parts* of our sinfull selves. It is alwayes our sin to forget our sins, but it is often mercy in God to make us forget them. *Know therefore that God makes thee to forget thine iniquity*; that is, The Lord doth not set them in the eye of thy conscience, nor deals he with thee, as if thou hadst committed such sins, which yet he could bring to thy remembrance, and set them in order before thine eyes. So the interlineall gives it, *Know that God doth cause somewhat of thine iniquity to be hidden from thee, or to be a secret to thee.* God doth not open the pack of thine iniquity, and shew thee all the wickednes that is in thine heart and life. God lets some of it lie hid, and be as a thing forgot, or a secret to thy self.

*Scito quod
Deus latere fa-
cit aliquid de
iniquitate tua.
Ari. Montan.*

Secondly, Others refer this forgetfulness to God himself, who is said to forget the fault, when he remits the punishment. This comes up to the sense of our Translators, for when a thing is forgotten, then it is not exacted, or called for. (Act. 17. 32.) *The times of this ignorance God winked at*; he regarded not, he looked not after what was done (that's the common exposition of the Text) God did (as it were) forget the sinfulness of those times; As

H

God

God is ſaid to forget ſin, or to remember it no more, when he fully pardons it: So he may be ſaid to forget ſin, when he doth not fully puniſh it. When meer ignorance hinders man from ſeeing, meer mercy hinders God from ſeeing. He is pleaſed to wink, when we cannot ſee. *When men have not much underſtanding what to do, God hath not much memory of what they do*; that is, He doth not ſtrictly reckon with them, or bring them to an account for what they have done. Though a ſin of ignorance is damnable in it ſelf, and may condemn the ſinner, yet the Lord puts a difference between ſins committed ignorantly and knowingly, in the dark and in the light, between thoſe which are committed againſt the light of nature only, and thoſe committed againſt Goſpel-light. Thus the preſent Expoſition carries it, *Know, O Job, that God handles thee, as if he had forgotten or were ignorant of thine iniquity*. Which interpretation a learned Writer makes his tranſlation of the Text, *Know therefore that God hath remitted part of thine iniquity*.

*Scito quod
Deus remiſiſ-
tibi partem ini-
quitarum tua-
rum. Vatab.
Oblitus, i. e. pa-
ram iniquita-
tis tue debi-
tam diſculis.
Tygur.*

A third renders, *Know therefore that God hath deferred thine iniquity*, he hath put it aſide for a time, and hath not called thee to a preſent answer. Deferring is a temporary forgetting; when a man doth willingly forget a thing, he intends not to take a ſtrict or ſudden account of it, as when he forgets unwillingly or thorow infirmity, he cannot take any account of it at all.

*Scito quod
oblitus eſt tui
Deus propter
iniquitatem.*

There is yet a fourth interpretation given from this ſenſe of the word, *Know therefore that God hath forgotten thee, becauſe of thine iniquity*; and ſo the forgetfulneſſe lies upon Jobs perſon, and not upon Jobs ſin; Thou complaineſt that God regards thee not, hears not thy cry, attends not to thy prayer, haſtens not in with relief and ſuccour in this thy ſad condition, *Know that God forgets thee*, and he hath reaſon to do ſo, *He forgets thee becauſe of thine iniquity*. God forgets thoſe who have forgotten him, *Prov. i. 28*. *Then ſhall they call upon me, but I will not answer, they ſhall ſeek me early, but they ſhall not finde me*. But hath not the Lord promiſed to answer when we call, yea to answer before we call? Hath he not promiſed to be found of thoſe that ſeek him, yea to be found of thoſe who ſeek him not? Why then are theſe earneſt ſutors rejected, unanswered? The cauſe was in themſelves; *They baſed knowledge*, therefore God would not know them, *They would none of his counſels*, therefore he would none of their prayers. God put them in mind, but they forgot him, therefore they put God

in mind, and he forgot them. *Know therefore that God hath forgotten thee, because of thine iniquity.* To obey God is to remember him, and none are so much remembered by God, as they who obey him, to sin against God is to forget him, and none are forgotten of God, but for their sin.

We translate, *God exacteth of thee lesse then thine iniquity deserveth*, the word signifies also to lend (as was toucht before) so we read it (*Dent. 15. 2. Dent. 24. 10.*) in the laws given to the Jews about releasing: to exact lesse than due, is, to release somewhat of what is lent. The adverb *lesse* is not in the originall, no nor the verb *deserveth*, our Translators have added both in a different letter, to supply and clear their sense upon the place. The words being only thus, *Know that God exacteth of thee for thine iniquity.* Mr. Broughton renders it roundly so, *Know that the Puissant will call thee to an account for thine iniquity.* Another learned Translator gives it thus, *Acknowledge at least that God exacteth somewhat of thee for thine iniquity*, As if he had said, *Doe not thinke that all this evil is come upon thee without cause, for shame submit, and confesse that thy sinne hath deserved some of it.* Our rendring alludes to the dealing of a mercifull Creditour with his debtour, who is willing to be compounded with, for what is justly owing him. Or to the dealing of a mercifull Magistrate towards a malefactor, when he layes not the rigour of the Law upon him. Thus the Jews would not exact so much punishment of *Paul*, as they supposed his iniquity deserved. The Law admitted fourty stripes: they would not go to the utmost line of justice, they, to do him a courtesie, or to avoid the suspition of cruelty (though this mercy was cruell) abated him an ace, and therefore gave him only fourty stripes save one. The mercy of God to man runs not like this or any other mercy of man to man. When we say, *God exacted lesse then iniquity deserveth*, we mean, God hath not exacted half, no nor a tenth of what our iniquity deserveth. He sets down but fifty in his bill of chastenings, for an hundred, which he finds in our bill of transgressings. And this half which he exacteth is not taken either to satisfie himself, or properly to punish us, but to purifie us, that we may glorifie him. God exacteth so little, that indeed he exacteth nothing. The word is harsh and hears ill among men, but God is so good to *Israel*, that we know not how to call him an exactour, but because he doth not exact.

נִשְׁכַּח
Significat m-
tuo dare & ex-
igere, more sa-
nitatoris.

Agnosce saltem
exigere ab eo
Deum aliquid
de iniquitate
tua. Jun.

2 Cor. 11. 24.

Hence observe,

First, *Every sin makes us debtors to God.*

We are in his books, and in his bonds for every transgression. All men are in a debt of duty to God (as creatures) which if they pay not, they sin, and so run into a double debt, a debt of duty, which they should have performed, and a debt of penalty, because they have not performed it. *Tribulation and anguish upon every soul of man that doth evil, there is the penalty.* Creatures owe God a duty, which they ought to pay, and sinners owe him a penalty, which must be paid, either by themselves, or by their Surety. The Apostle useth that phrase (*Gal. 3.*) *Every man that is circumcised, is a debtor to the whole law.* He is a debtor in regard of duty, because he that thinks himself bound to keep one part of the Ceremoniall Law, doth thereby bind himself to keep it all; where the parts are inseparably united, we pull all upon us by engaging or meddling with any one. And he that is a debtor in duty to keep the whole Law, must needs be a debtor in regard of the penalty, because he is not able to keep any part of it. And that's the reason why Christ (who stood in the place of sinners) was put to pay both these debts, that so he might fully cut scores with the Law. He paid the debt of duty, by fulfilling all righteousness. He also paid the debt of penalty, by enduring all sorrows, even the sorrows of death it self. We do but confesse the debt, and God crosseth the book, and cancellerth all our bonds. *If we confesse our sins, he is faithfull to forgive us our sins, and the blood of Christ cleanseth us from all unrighteousness, 1 Joh. 1. 9.* The red lines of his blood are drawn over the black and abominable lines of our transgressions, and so the debt is discharged.

Secondly, Observe,

If God exact not the whole debt of sinners, it is mercy.

Zophar would have Job to know this, Thou hast spoken hardly of God, because he hath smitten and afflicted thee, but God doth not exact of thee what thine iniquity deserveth, Is not this mercy? *It is of the Lords mercies that we are not consumed, Lam. 3. v. 22. and vers. 39. Wherefore doth a living man complain, a man for the punishment of his sins. It is mercy if life be spared. Though a man be not left a rich man, a strong man, yet if he be left a living man, yea though but a man, he hath no reason to complain, while he remembers he is a sinfull man, and is punished for his sin. It is mercy that we have not the whole debt laid upon us, If*

God

God defer any time, or remit any part, it is a favour: As Christ paid, so he paid all for believers: and the damned shall pay all in hell, there shall be no releasing, no compounding of their debts. And because they are not able to pay down the full summe at once, therefore they shall alwaies be paying. How rich is the grace which we have by Jesus Christ, thorow whom God releaseth all our debts! We must have paid all, if Christ had not paid all. Now he hath paid all, and we pay none at all. Christ having paid all for his redeemed ones, God doth not exact one farthing from them, much lesse the utmost farthing, as he will from the impenitent and unbelievers.

Thirdly, Observe,

Afflictions are the desert of sinne.

God exacteth of thee lesse then thy iniquity, or then thine iniquity, deserveth. Most are afflicted for their sin, none had ever been afflicted, if they had not sinned. The doctrine is true, though Zophar failed in his application. Job was a sinner (the best of Saints on earth are sinners) yet God afflicted Job for the trial and improvement of grace, not for the purging or correcting of his iniquity, as hath been observed from those words in the second Chapter, *Thou provokest me to afflict him without cause*, that is, without such cause as thou suggestest, his iniquity or hypocisie.

Fourthly, Observe,

That all the afflictions of this life are lesse than our sins.

That's Ezra's confession (Ezra 9. 13.) *After all that is come upon us for our evil deeds, and for our great trespasses, seeing that thou our God hast punished us, lesse than our iniquities deserve. Was it a touch, or some light stroke which God gave Jerusalem? Was their wound but a scratch, or their affliction little? Read the Lamentations of Jeremy, and you shall finde how doleful, how sad, how terrible a judgement was brought upon Jerusalem, even such, as was not done under the whole heaven, and yet Ezra saith, Thou hast punished us lesse than our iniquities deserve. As all the good which we do in this life, is lesse than the least of the mercies of God, so the least evil of sin which we commit, is greater than all the evils of punishment in this life. In the life to come, God will make even with sinners and with Saints. These shall receive as much good as Christ hath deserved for them, and they shall receive as much evil as themselves have deserved: Both are here*

short of their due, yea and incapable of their due. The Saints in this life cannot hold ſo much glory as Chriſt hath purchaſed (1 Cor. 15. 50.) *Fleſh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God.* The frame of nature, though purified and purged, is not receptive of heavenly glory. Thus alſo the frame of mans nature unpurified, is not receptive of ſo much puniſhment, as ſin deſerveth: This fleſh and blood cannot enter into the kingdom of hell. Therefore as the Saints ſhall have ſpiritual bodies, that they may be fit veſſels for the glory of heaven; ſo the wicked ſhall (in a ſenſe) have ſpiritual bodies too, that, they may be fit veſſels for the miſery of hell. Their bodies ſhall not die, their bodies ſhall live without the ſupport of natures, meat and drink, ſleep or reſreſhing. Thus they ſhall have an angelical life; and all to this end, That they may be capable ſubjects of the fury and wrath of God, even of all that vengeance, which he hath prepared, and will pour out upon thoſe who diſobey the Goſpel, and come not in to receive Jeſus Chriſt. We may ſay of wicked men in this life, *Verily they have their reward*, they have ſeen the beſt of their daies, the beſt of their ſtate; But how much ſo ever any wicked man is puniſhed, though he ſpend all his daies groaning and ſighing, though he be poor and ſick, weak and pained, though he lie upon the rack of the moſt torturing diſeaſes, the ſtone, goot, &c. yet it cannot be ſaid of this man, *He hath had his puniſhment.* A miſerable ignorant man is ready to ſay, *I hope I have had my puniſhment, my hell in this life.* Alas, poor ſoul, thou maiſt be pained here, and in hell too: thou maiſt go from rack to rack, from torture to torture; preſent puniſhments are but as a ſip of that cup, which ſhall be drunk to the bottom in hell, they are but as ſports ſo the pain there, and as painted fire to real fire. As the beſt of the Saints portion is behind, Their works follow them, their reward waits for them; So the worſt of a wicked mans portion is behind, his ſins follow him, his works of ſpiritual darknes follow him into eternal darknes, his puniſhment waits for him: Though his judgement be now aſleep, yet it will awake, and never ſleep, no nor ſlumber any more.

JOB Chap. 11. verſ. 7, 8, 9, 10, 11.

Canſt thou by ſearching find out God? Canſt thou find out the Almighty unto perfection?

It is as high as heaven, what canſt thou doe? deeper then hell, what canſt thou know?

The meaſure thereof is longer then the earth, and broader then the ſea.

If he cut off, and ſhut up, or gather together, then who can hinder him?

For he knoweth vain man, He ſeeth wickedneſſe alſo, Will he not conſider it?

For vain man would be wiſe, though man is born like a wilde aſſes colt.

THe three firſt verſes of this context, are an illuſtration, or a comment upon the ſixth. Zophar having breathed out his wiſh, *O that God would ſpeak, and that he would ſhew thee the ſecrets of wiſdom, that they are double to that which is,* proceeds to prove, That it is but need he ſhould: thoſe ſecrets being ſuch, as none can ſee till they are ſhewed: This he ſets on rhetorically, with a vehemently negative expoſtulation,

Verſe 7. *Canſt thou by ſearching find out God? Thou canſt not. Canſt thou finde out the Almighty unto perfection? It is impoſſible.* In the two following verſes, the 8th and 9th he purſues the ſame argument, advancing the wiſdom of God above the higheſt heavens, and carrying it below the loweſt parts of the earth, *The greateſt extent of things created is too narrow for the Creator.* Man's natural wiſdom reacheth at the moſt but to the utmoſt bounds of nature. But Gods wiſdom is *as high as* (that is, higher then) *heaven, yea deeper then hell, the meaſure thereof is longer then the earth, and broader then the ſea.*

From the vaſtneſs of Gods wiſdom he deſcends to the abſoluteſſe of his ſoveraignty at the tenth verſe, and gives an account, or an argument of both in the eleventh and twelfth.

[Verse 7. *Canst thou by searching finde out God?*

חקר
Perscrutatus
est inquisivit
remota aut ab-
strusa.

The word implies exactest diligence to finde. *Canst thou by searching finde?* that is, *Canst thou finde by all thy studies and endeavours?* There is a finding by chance or accident, as well as a finding by search. Some cannot finde what they search for: others finde what they search not for (*Psal. 116. 3.*) *The sorrows of death compassed me, and the pains of hell got hold upon me, I found trouble and sorrow, I found trouble which I looked not for, I was not searching after sorrow, but I found it.* There's an elegance in the original (note that by the way) *The pains of hell got hold upon me;* so we read; the Hebrew is, *The pains of hell found me* (one word signifies both) *they found me, I did not finde them.* But no sooner had the pains of hell found me, but I found trouble and sorrow enough, and soon enough.

But usually the word noteth a finding (as here) upon enquiring. *Canst thou by searching finde?* *Canst thou finde out God, by thy exactest scrutiny, by the trial of all thy wits, or by the improvement of all thy abilities?* That which is easie, is found with little search; That which is hardest cannot be found with all our search. When God would shew the obviousness and openness of the sin of man, he saith, *I have not found it by secret search, but upon all these*, Jer. 2. 34. Their sins are evident to every eye. Here when Zophar would shew the mysteriousness of the wisdom of God, he saith, *Thou canst not finde it by the most secret search.*

Præsentantque
resert qualiter
serba Deum.

But you will say, Cannot God be found by searching? God is every where, The invisible God is every where visible. Sense sees somewhat of him, though faith sees most (*By faith Moses saw him that is invisible*, Heb. 11.) Sense shews somewhat of him to those who have no faith. You might read much of God in the book of nature, if you had not the book of Scripture to read. Thus the Apostle convinceth the Gentiles (*Rom. 1. 20.*) *The invisible things of God, to wit, his eternal power and God-head, are seen in the things that are made;* And how are they seen? What? by opening their bowels, or by looking into their heart? No, If you look but upon the face, the surface of the creature, if but upon the rinde, the out-side of the things that are made, even their external form and fashion, their beauty and order draw goodly lines, and make fair representations of God himself,

even of his eternal power and God head. Doe but pull up a graſſe from the earth, or crop off a leaf from a tree, and you may ſee God upon it. How is it then ſaid, that you cannot finde out God, no not by ſearching?

Answer firſt, We may finde God by ſearching, but we cannot finde him out, that is, we cannot finde the utmoſt of God, as the next claufe ſeems to explain, *Canſt thou finde out the Almighty to perfection?*

Secondly, God may be conſidered, either in his being, or in the manner of his being. In his working, or in the manner of his working.

In his being, God is eaſily found out: This notion lies uppermoſt, or riſeth up in every heart; it is a principal that lives in, and cannot be blotted out of a natural conſcience; Thouſands deny God, but all (who have not quite put out the very light of nature) acknowledge there is a God. A Heathen ſaid, *There is no Nation ſo barbarous, ſo untaught and ignorant, but confeſſeth there is a God.* When man fell from God, this truth ſtood; as when Cities and great buildings are overthrowen by warre, ſome Towers, ſome Pinacles ſurvive the violence, ſo amongſt the ruines and decays of that perfect nature, which God made at firſt, the notion of a God remained. Atheiſts, who would not finde God, finde him againſt their wills, even whether they will or no. While they thruſt God out of their converſations, he continues in their conſciences. That God is, is ſo eaſily found, that it can hardly be loſt; It is found with ſo little ſtudy, that many who ſtudy much to loſe it, cannot.

But you cannot finde out God in the manner of his being, of what a God he is: you cannot finde out his power and wiſdom, his holineſſe and his juſtice, his faithfulneſſe and unchangeableneſſe with all your ſearch; You cannot finde theſe diſtinctly in the book of nature, nor underſtand them eaſily when you finde them plainly deſcribed, and highly magnified in the book of Scripture.

Again, We may finde out God in his working, or in his works, we may ſee ſuch works done, as ſpeak a God, ſuch, as all muſt ſay with the Magicians of *Agypt*, *The finger of God is here*; We may finde this with a little ſearching, poſſibly without ſearching; we can hardly hide this from your eyes, yea, if we ſhut our eyes, we have much adoe not to ſee it. Some cannot ſee, though their
1 eyes

eyes are open ; others shut their eyes , lest they should see (*Isa.* 26. 11.) *Lord, when thine hand is lifted up, they will not see.* Some workings of God are so eminent and evident , that if men were not willfully blinde, they must needs see them. That God works, that there is a divine power , carrying on the affairs of the world, is written as with a beam of the Sun. But if we consider the manner of his working, ther's a secret, that's mysterious : Providence hath such various waies , such intricate turnings , that a searching man may be to seek about them. God doth not alwaies leave the print of his foot-steps , where he goeth. The way of an Eagle in the air , the way of a ship in the midst of the sea , the way of a serpent upon a rock , are not so untraceable as many of the waies of God.

Now forasmuch as *Zophar* treating of the wisdom of God, concludeth, That God cannot be found out. Having wished, *O that he would shew thee the secrets of wisdom*, he puts not the Question thus, *Canst thou by searching finde out the wisdom of God ?* But, *Canst thou by searching finde out God ?*

Hence observe,

The wisdom of God is God.

So also the power of God is God , and the holiness of God is God. The attributes and qualities of God , are essential to God ; there is no distinction between substance and quality in God ; man and his qualities are two things , man and his wisdom , man and his holiness are distinct, Many men are neither wise nor holy , yet men still. But God and his wisdom , God and his holiness are the same ; He could not be God, if he were either unwise or unholy. *Once have I sworn by my holiness* , saith God, *Psalms* 89. 36. that is, I have sworn by my self , as the Apostle explains it, *Heb.* 6. 13. *Because he could swear by no greater , he swore by himself.*

Secondly, Observe,

The wisdom of God is unsearchable.

As they said in the book of *Judges*, *As the man is so is his might* ; so we may say much more , *As God is, so is his wisdom.* There is more wisdom of God in making the least thing , then we can make out. Then, what is there in God himself ? If a man should be examined about the meanest creature , Can he resolve fully, why it is made of such matter , why in such a form ? Can he tell why the colour is such, or such the qualities ? why for such uses,
and

and why unto such ends? God hath bestowed great skill upon smallest works.

Thirdly, Observe,
God is unsearchable.

Canst thou by searching finde out God? It is not in vain to seek God, but it is in vain to search him. God is *not farre from any man* (A^ct. 17. 27.) but he is farre above all men. When a Philosopher was asked by *Hiero*, What God was? *I cannot answer suddenly* (said he) *pray give me a daies time to consider of it;* when that day was ended, and the King demanded an answer, he desired a second day, and after that a third, till at last he gave it over, professing he could not finde our God. God exceeds and swallows up, not only the reason of natural men, but of spiritual. They who are enlightened by the grace of God, cannot see all the light that is in God, or all of God, who is light.

Fourthly, When *Zophar* saith, *Canst thou by searching finde out God?* He seems to imply, That

There is a way to finde out much of God, though we cannot finde him by searching.

The best knowledge of God is from his own revelation, not by our study. Would you finde our God? Do not think to do it by beating your brains, but by beating the heavens. The knowledge of God cometh down from God; we know him when he makes himself known to us. And usually he doth not make his fulnesse known to us, till we make our emptinesse known to him. We cannot finde out God by reading, but we may by praying.

If any man lack wisdom (especially this wisdom to know God) *let him ask of God, who giveth liberally, and upbraides not.* It was ^{*done or assisted*} a good speech of *Luther*, *He hath studied well, who hath praied well:* ^{*done studied.*}

Praier attains the key of mysteries, and faith enters into them. *Luth.* Hence, when *Zophar* had praied, *O that God would speak, and that he would open his lips, and shew thee the secrets of wisdom,* He presently concludes all searches about him successlesse, without him, *Canst thou by searching finde out God?*

Fifthly, *If by searching we cannot finde out God, then we must not boldly pry and presse into the secret of God.*

Yet this should not quench endeavour, but regulate it, and keep it in compasse; This should make us humble, but it must not make us idle. Though we cannot know all of God, yet we are bound to learn all that may be known. It will be as much our

sin not to desire to know what we may, as to desire to know what we may not. It is our duty to enquire and travel to the utmost of our line; we must not sit down where we are, because we cannot go as farre as we would. As we must aim at, and labour after perfection in holines, though we cannot reach it; so also in knowledge. We must not rest in any imperfect knowledge of God, because we cannot know him perfectly. Which Zophar teacheth us in the next words;

Canst thou finde out the Almighty unto perfection?

This latter clause gives light to the former; For some may object: Cannot we finde out God by searching? *Great difficulties whet and quicken industry, but a total impossibility not only dulls, but deadens it:* If we cannot finde out God, why then doe we search? Yes, you must search, and you may finde, *but you cannot finde him out unto perfection by all your searchings.*

כלה

quam Graci
circumdant red-
dere solent, sig-
nificat finem
vel consumma-
tionem rei.
Juxta Apolli-
narium accipi-
tur pro praeor-
dine quasi dei
praeordia, cor-
disque recessus
penetrare homi-
ni sit impossi-
bile

The word, *Perfection*, in the Original, signifies the height, strength, or utmost accomplishment of a thing. A learned Au-
thour translates it, *the parts about the heart, or the closest lodges of the heart*; which by a metaphor signifies our inward thoughts and most retired imaginations. As if he had said, *Canst thou finde out the inmost recesses or secrets of Gods heart? Hast thou seen what is laid up in the inner chambers of his Spirit?* The heart of man is deep, only God can search it; but O how deep is the heart of God? no man can search it.

I finde a like interpretation given of the former clause, in an-
swer to this: *Canst thou by searching finde out God?* rendring it
thus; *Canst thou finde out the last thing of God?* The word (*Ha-
kar*) which we translate *searching*, signifies the chief and last of
a thing. And so that text of *Solomon* is expounded by the same
Author (*Prov. 25. 27.*) *It is not good to eat much honey, so for
men to search their own glory, is not glory*; so we render: he thus,
It is not good to eat much honey, but the last of glory is glory; The
sense of which reading is to this effect. The best of temporal
and outward things (*honey it self*) if you eat much of them,
will not be sweet, you may eat honey till honey be loathsome to
you; but glory, or heavenly things (he rakes glory for the hap-
pinesse which man shall have with God in heaven, not for the
same or respect which man hath with man on earth, which is the
sense of our translation) *glory (I say) or the state of heaven, is,*

חקר
significat ul-
timum sum-
mumque Coc.

such

such, that the last of it is glory: the longer you feed upon glory, the sweeter it will be, the last bit will be as sweet as the first; *The Manna which came down from heaven was loathed by the Israelites. But no Israelite shall loath the Manna which he findes in heaven:* The last of glory will be glory; the longer we eat, the more we shall delight; the more we taste those dainties, the more pleasant will they be to our taste. Taking the word (*Hakar*) in that sense, it may be rendred, *Canst thou finde out the last of God?* And so it falls in with this, *Canst thou finde him out unto perfection?*

Unto perfection.] Canst thou come to the uttermost of what God is? or of what God doth? Canst thou know God, as we speak (*a capite ad calcem,*) from head to foot, from beginning to end, from first to last, within and without? Canst thou take in all the excellencies and dimensions of God? thou canst not do it, man, wert thou more then a man; hadst thou the understanding of an Angel thou couldst not doe it. *How much soever thou art above man, below God, thou canst not finde out God unto perfection; God only knows God perfectly.*

Hence observe,

Though much of God may be found out, yet all cannot: We cannot finde him out unto perfection. Finite cannot hold infinite. Some may conceit (but it is a meer conceit) that they can, as a Country fellow thinks, if he were upon such a mountain which bounds the Horizon, he could touch Heaven, and take a Star in his hand; but when he comes thither, heaven is as far off as it was, and the Stars as much out of his reach, as they were, where he stood before: Such are the guessees of men about God: if they could attain such a point, and be resolved in such a doubt, then doubtlesse they should know all the mysteries of the divine nature: but if they get thither, they are as far from the perfection of God as before: for how neer soever we come to God, there is an infinite distance between us and God. Every beleever is neer God in affection, yet is he still infinite removes from his perfection; *When we seem to come neere the perfections of God, God goes further off from us, and we are as much to seek as ever.* When holy

Augustine walked by the sea side, rapt in the meditation of God and of his wayes, he heard a voice which bad him *lade the ocean with a cockle-shell:* we may sooner drain the ocean with such a little shell, or with a spoon, then the perfections of God with our

largest understandings. The Lord bespeaks *Job* chap. 38. 22. *Hast thou entred into the treasures of the snow?* There are secrets in nature, which were never entred into by art: The treasures of the snow descend upon us, but we cannot ascend into the treasures of the snow, we cannot enter into naturall things, how shall we enter into spirituall? how shall we enter into the God of spirits? *Eye hath not seen. nor ear heard, neither have entred into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him,* 1 Cor. 2. 9. And if the things which God hath prepared for man, have not yet entred into his heart, can God who hath prepared those things enter into his heart? *Solomon* puts the question *Eccles. 11. 5. Canst thou know how the bones doe grow in the wombe of her that is with childe? Even so (saith he) thou knowest not the works of God who maketh all:* If naturall questions pose us, divine questions may amaze us. To know God here is eternall life, and yet we shall not know all of God in eternall life. It is our perfection to know God while we sojourn here upon the earth, yet we shall not know God to the utmost of his perfection in heaven: in heaven we shall know him perfectly, but not unto perfection: *Now we know in part, then we shall know as we are known;* that is, we shall know much, we shall know abundantly: *Now we see thorow a glasse darkly, but then face to face* 1 Cor. 13. v. 12. that is clearly, immediatly, not by reflexion, but by intuition. Then the curtains shall be drawn aside, then all the clouds and dark vapours which stand between us and truth, shall be scattered from before our eyes: Then, the beautifull face of truth shall be unveiled, there shall not so much as any doubt interpose between truth and our understandings. Those perplexed questions and fatall controversies, which have troubled the peace of the Churches, and exercised, yea vexed the greatest wits to resolve and compose them, shall have all their knots untied, and their fallacies discovered by the meanest scholar in glory. And yet *Zophars* denying question may be put to the highest graduate in glory; *Canst thou finde out God unto perfection?* As there shall be no seekers in heaven, so, no such finders. Creatures shall there know so much of God as will make them perfectly happy, but to know God unto perfection, is more then comes to the share of a creatures happinesse. *'Tis the perfect happinesse of God, to know himself unto perfection.*

Zophar having by way of question laid down this position,
That

That, man cannot finde out God unto perfection, exemplifies it.

Verſe 8. *It is as high as heaven, what canſt thou doe? deeper then hell, what canſt thou know?*

It is as high as heaven, what canſt thou doe? What is as high as heaven? The wiſdome of God is. Wiſdome [is the ſoaring antecedent to this relative. The Hebrew is plurall, *It is as the highneſſes of heaven;* take all the heights and elevations, all the ſpears and ſtories of heaven, climbe the loftieſt pinnacles of heaven, wiſdome is higher, or high beyond them all, ſo it may be rendered from the originall; *high above the heavens.*

Some Translators give us the text in this interrogation, *What wilt thou doe in the height of the heavens?* which ſounds like the Apoſtles caution; *Be not high minded, but fear:* or like *Dauids* humble acknowledgement *Pſal. 131. 1. I doe not exerciſe my ſelf in things too high for me:* as if he had ſaid, Seeing thou canſt not mannage the height of the heavens, ſurely thou canſt not diſgeſt the height of God who is above the heavens: If thou ſhouldeſt be put to give an account of things in heaven, of the Sun, Moon and Stars, or of their motion, thou wilt be puzzled. How then wilt thou be able to give an account of him who is higher then the heavens, whom the heaven of heavens cannot contain, *1 King. 8. 17. Iſa. 66. 1. who alſo buildeth his ſtories in the heavens?* Amos 9. 6. *Aſtronomers* have left us the doctrine of the heavens, they tell us of the nature and order, of the qualities and influences of thoſe ſuperiour bodies: but they ſpeak moſt by gueſſe, or without book. There is no certainty in that knowledge, though ſome probability. *Aſtronomers* look up to heaven, but they bring little of heaven down to us. *What wilt thou doe in the height of heaven?*

Further when *Zophar* ſaith, *the wiſdome of God is as high as heaven,* he means, his wiſdome is exceeding high. The higheſt heaven being the higheſt of all things viſible, that muſt needs be higher then the higheſt of viſibles, which is higher then the heavens; and becauſe thoſe things which are extream high affect us highly, therefore he gives divine wiſdome the utmoſt line of the dimension. *It is as high as heaven.*

Deeper then hell, what canſt thou know? The word *Sheol*, is taken for all that is deep or low, ſometimes it is put in ſpeciall for the grave, here for the place of the damned. As we can do little in

Altitudines cali
Heb. Emphaſin
continet plurale
more Hebraeo
maximam al-
titudinem ſi-
gnificans.

Quid facies in
altitudine calo-
rum? Sept.
Vatabl. Pagn.
Regin.

Deus non ſo-
lum in rebus
creatis eſt, ſed
extra, pra ſua
eſſentia immen-
ſitatem. Auguſt.
lib. 11. de Civ.
Dei cap. 5.
Damaſc. l. 2.
de Orthodox.
Fide cap. 6.

שְׁאוֹל

denotat omnia
loca ſubterra-
nea Deus.

the

Jupiter est.
summus vertex
atque infima
planta Orph
in Satyr. hym
no apud Euseb.
l. 3. c. 3. de
præpar. Evang.

the height of heaven, so we know little of the lowest hell. Some of the upper part of the earth is to us yet (*terra incognita*) an unknown land; but all of the lowest part of hell, is to us an unknown land: Many thousands have travelled thither, but none have returned thence to make reports or write books of their travels. That peece of Geography is very imperfect. *It is deeper then hell, what canst thou know?* Heaven and hell are the greatest opposites or remotest extreame. (*Math. 12. 23.*) *Then Capernaum which art exalted up to heaven, shall be brought down to hell:* Heaven and hell are at farthest naturall distance, and are therefore the everlasting receptacles of those who are at the furthest morall distance; beleivers and unbelievers, Saints and impenitents. And as the height of heaven, so the depth of hell is ascribed to wisdom, to shew the unsearchableness of it. *O the depth (as well as O the height) of the wisdom of God, how unsearchable are his judgements, and his wayes past finding out;* (*Rom. 11. 35.*) We read of the deep things of God (*1 Cor. 2. 10.*) *The Spirit searcheth all things, even the deep things, or the depths of God.* Satan, who is full of subtilty and craft, hath his depths also (*Rev. 2. 24.*) *But unto you I say, as many as have not know the depths of Satan;* This is, who have not approved nor practised the policies and devices which Satan inspires his disciples with, under the notion of profound wisdom. Depths of all sorts lie far out of our view, and are hard to be found out.

Verse 9. *The measure (or the stature) of it is longer than the earth, and broader then the sea.*

The former verse shewed us the height and depth of wisdom; this its length and breadth.

Populari modo loquitur nam hoc spatio ac distantia vulgus vixil rarius concipit. Bold.

Matthæus occidens; quod mare magnum erat ad plagam occidentalem terra Israel.

It is longer then the earth.] He speaks popularly, or to the shortest and narrowest capacity; man thinks there is nothing longer than the earth; The length of many parts of the earth is exceeding long: how long then is the whole earth. Mathematicians tell us, that the circumference of the earth is about 22 thousand miles, a vast length; and the measure is the same in the length of it from east to west; or in the breadth of it, from north to south; Every Sphæricall body is of equall dimensions. The measure of wisdom is longest, being longer then the earth, which is the longest journey man ever travelled.

And broader than the sea.] Latitude or breadth is usually ascribed

bed to the sea, as longitude or length unto the earth. The Psalmist in his meditations upon the works of God, calls it, *The great and wide sea*; Psalm 14. 25. Breadth is ascribed to the sea, because of its huge extension. The sea is a lower firmament: and as the upper firmament is called in the Hebrew, *A thing stretched out, or spread forth*. The upper firmament is an *expansion*; so also is this lower firmament, the sea. The sea puts out long arms; and thence it is denominated *broad*. The breadth of a man is measured by his arms stretched forth, as his length is measured from head to foot. Thus the sea stretching forth its mighty arms to embrace the earth (We commonly call them, *The arms of the sea*) carries away the name from all other creatures for latitude or breadth. There is nothing counted so wide and roomy as the sea. Such (and how much more no man knows) is the wisdom and knowledge of God.

Here are four very different dimensions met together; height and depth; length and breadth; yet they all minde and speak the same thing, *That the wisdom of God is infinite*; higher then all natural height, and deeper then all natural depth; broader then all natural breadth; and longer then all natural length. The Apostle speaking of the love of God in Christ (Ephes. 3. 18. 19) ascribeth these four dimensions to it; with which Zophar here adorns the wisdom of God, *That you may be able to comprehend with all Saints, what is the breadth and length, and depth and height, and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge*. Many will run riot in Geometrical notions about these natural dimensions. And whereas Naturalists give us but three dimensions of a body, longitude, latitude and profundity, the love and wisdom of God have altitude added, which is a fourth. But all these dimensions serve only to shew the immensity both of the love and wisdom of God.

But observe, *Job 40. 12.* *He that hath created all things, shall not be able to reach the perfection of creatures; should convince him of his utter inability to reach God in his perfection.*

For when Zophar affirms the wisdom of God higher then heaven; deeper then hell, &c. He by a lesser impossibility would convince a greater. Thou canst not finde out the height of heaven; nor the depth of hell; thou canst not take the perfect length of the earth; nor the breadth of the sea; therefore much lesse art thou able to take the height and depth, the length and breadth

of God himself, or of his wisdom.

Secondly, When he saith, that the wisdom of God is higher, longer, deeper and broader then heaven, earth, hell and sea. We may observe,

That God is present with all his creatures in all places.

The wisdom of God is every where, therefore God is. Wisdom is the eye of God, and God is said to have seven eyes (that is, many eyes, or a manifold wisdom) running to and fro thorow the whole earth, Zech. 3. 9. cap. 4. 10. There is one God and Father of all, who is above all, and thorow all, and in you all, Eph. 4. 6. God is above all, not only in regard of power and authority, but of inspection and over-sight. God stands aloft, as upon a watch-tower, beholding all that's done below, whether within or without, whether for or against the Church. There is no turning, no corner, wherein any can stand unobserved. for as he is above, so he is thorow all, and in all: He is thorow all the world by his common providence, as well as in all his Saints by his special grace. *In him we live and move, and have our beings, ACT. 17.* Yes he is present in all places, not only virtually and efficaciously, but essentially. It is not with God as with the Sun, the Sun is fixt in its orb, and from thence sends forth its light and influence into all the world; We cannot say the Sun is every where, though the light and heat of the Sun are every where; the body of the Sun is only in heaven. Again, it is not with God, as with a King, who sits upon his throne, and yet hath long hands, and many eyes, reaching all places of his Dominion, but it is by his Authority and Commissions only. A King is virtually present in many places at once, but not personally, wheresoever his residence

*Essentia divina
tota est intra
omnia & tota
extra omnia.
Nusquam in-
clusa aut exclu-
sa, omnia con-
tinens a nullo
contenta, nec
propterea est
omnium rerum
aut sordibus im-
quinata Aug.
Ep. 57. ad Dar.*

is, there his person is, and no where else. Whereas Gods hands and eyes, his power and wisdom extend over all personally. The divine nature is as large and vast, as the divine power. *Deus non est filli heaven and earth*, saith the Lord (*Jer. 23. 24.*) Once more, God is every where, not as the air is every where, The air is part in one place, and part in another, God is all in every place; God is wholly in the height of heaven, and wholly in the depth of hell, wholly in the length of the earth, and wholly in the breadth of the sea. All God is in all things, and all God is without all things, he is without all things, and not shut out of any thing, he is in all things, and not included in any thing, so the Ancients speak of this wonderfull mystery of Gods omnipresence.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, Note,

God is not only in, but above and beyond all creatures.

He is higher then heaven, and deeper then hell. (So the Hebrews) 2 Chron. 2. 6. Who is able to build him a house? (saith Solomon) seeing the heaven, and heaven of heavens cannot contain him? God hath given a limit to every thing, but himself hath none. He that made all things cannot be circumscribed by the things which he hath made. Man makes a house, and there he dwelleth, his house shuts him in. God hath made a house big enough for all creatures, but not big enough for himself. *The heaven, and the heavens of heavens cannot contain him, how much lesse this house which I have builded,* saith the same Solomon? The heaven of heavens is the highest heaven, the chiefest heaven, the third heaven, the heaven compassing and containing all those heavens which we behold. That heaven which containeth the heavens, cannot contain the God of heaven. (1 King. 8. 27.) *God is a sphere, whose center is every where, and whose circumference is no where.*

Fourthly, Observe,

All that is done in the world, is done by the ordering or over-ruling hand of God.

God useth means, but himself is present with all the means he useth, and *acts in every thing that acts*; He that is every where can as well do all, as any one thing. A man who hath many businesses to do at the same time in many places cannot attend them all, and gives the reason, *Do you think I can be every where? I was in such a place, could I be in this too?* Carnall minds think it a strange doctrine to affirm, That God doth all things, and that there is not any motion in the creature, but God is in it. But what difficulty is there in this, when we have once digested this principle, That God is every where? *He that is higher then heaven, and deeper then hell, &c.* is ready at every turn to do what is done. Kings send their Vicegerents and Deputies, who do their work, while themselves are absent. Kings are not in the means and with the means which they imploy, and that's the reason why instruments work often so contrary to the minde of Kings. They not being actually present with them, cannot over-rule and order them. But God being present with all instruments and second causes that are a work in the whole world, orders them all by his sovereign will. They who act against the revealed will of God, are yet order'd by his secret will. There is nothing done

against the counsel and purpose of God, though many things are done against the command and appointment of God. For as he is with every hand that helpeth us, so he is with every hand that smiteth us; as he is with every tongue that bleſſeth us, so he is with every tongue that curſeth us. When Shimei curſed David, he knew God was with that tongue, and therefore he ſaid, So let him curſe, because the Lord hath ſaid unto him, Curſe David, 2 Sam. 16. 10. We indeed pray to God, Our Father in heaven. Heaven is the throne of God, but heaven it is not the priſon of God, God is never ſhut up in heaven, though his glory ſhine moſt in heaven. But Moſes ſaith to Iſrael, Go me up, for the Lord is not among you (Numb. 14. 41.) I anſwer, The Lord is not among a people when he doth not aſſiſt, proſper and bleſſe them, but he is then among them, both, to obſerve what they do, and to puniſh what is done amiſſe. Thus God is near thoſe who depart from him, as is further cleared in the next point.

Fifthly, Obſerve, God beholds all the good, and all the evil that is done in the world.

His wiſdom being higher then heaven, and longer then the earth, brings him in intelligence from all the quarters and corners of heaven and earth; our works are before him, and ſo are our words. (Mat. 3. 16.) Then they that feared the Lord ſpoke one to another, What then? Did they whiſper ſo in one anothers ear, that no ear eſſe heard them? No, the Lord hearkned and heard it, the Lord liſtened (as it were) at the key-hole, he was under the window, and what then? A book of remembrance was written before him; all was kept upon record. And when they who do not fear the Lord ſpeak one to another, when wicked men plot againſt the righteous, or conſpire againſt the righteous waives of God; He hearkneth and heareth, and there is a book of remembrance kept of that too. Let them whiſper as ſoſtly as they can, God can hear, and will record all their malicious ſpeeches, all their evil deviſes and contrivements againſt himſelf, or againſt his ſervants.

Sixthly, Obſerve, There is no evading or guſſing from the juſtice of God.

God is higher then heaven, and deeper then hell, &c. Some who have done wickedly in one place, eſcape the Law by getting into another: they will be out of your bounds, and then they

are safe, But who can go out of Gods bounds? (Amos 9. 3, 4.) Though they dig into hell, thence shall my hand take them, though they climb up to heaven, thence will I bring them down, though they hide themselves in the top of Carmel, I will search them, and take them out thence, &c. And Psal. 139. 7, 8. Whither shall I go from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven thou art there, if I make my bed in hell, behold thou art there, if I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me, &c. There is no avoiding the justice of God, for there is no avoiding the presence of God. He hath power to arrest and attach a malefactor where ever he findes him, and he can finde him whereever he is, Though he dash, yet he shall not flee away, and though he escapeth, yet he shall not be delivered (Amos 9. 1.) that is, though he thinks he hath escaped, yet I (saith the Lord) will overtake him quickly, and my sentence shall be executed upon him. Thus the workings of God, and his wisdom, are compared unto, and exceed all the dimensions of the creature, he is above and beyond all their perfections, therefore unsearchable, therefore not to be found out into perfection.

Zophar from the infinite wisdom of God, descends to argue his Sovereignty, and the uncontrollable of his power.

Verse 10. If he cut off, and shut up, and gather together, then who can hinder him?

As if he had said, The Lord is in all places, and wheresoever he comes he is within his own Dominions; it is possible for the greatest Prince in the world to travel out of the bounds of his own power. The chief Officer of a City hath great power within that City, but beyond he cannot meddle. Kings have great power within their own Dominions, but get into another country, and they cannot reach you: Should a King act his Authority beyond his limits, many would hinder him, no man would obey him. But wheresoever God acts his authority, he is in his own kingdom, for all the world is his. Therefore none can hinder him. This Zophar shews in three acts of Sovereignty, 1. he cut off, 2. shut up, 3. gather together, who can hinder?

If he cut off,

The word signifies to change and alter, to put things into a

into, permitt
item exclud

nother course to passe away, as well as to cut off and destroy, That which is cut off is changed, and that which is destroyed passeth away. We have an elegant gradation (*Isa. 8. 8.*) and this word makes the first step of it, *He shall passe thorow Judah, he shall overflow and go over, he shall reach even to the neck, and the stretching out of his wings shall fill the breadth of thy Land, O Immanuel. He shall passe thorow,* that is, the King of *Assyria*, who is compared to a mighty river covering all its chanel, and over-flowing all its banks, He shall passe thorow the Land like a violent torrent, he shall destroy and cut off much people in *Immanuel's* land, that is, in *Christ's* land, *who is God with us*; Yet he will not suffer his people to be utterly cut off. The enemy who once associated and prevailed, shall associate and be broken, *For God is with us,* vers. 10.

And shut up.

700

Includers.

The word is taken two wayes, Sometimes in a good sense, so, *If he shut up,* is, if he secure any from danger, hiding them in his own pavilion of protection, *Deut. 32. 36. The Lord shall repent himself for his servants, when he seeth that their power is gone, and there is none shut up or left:* that is, When he shall see that none are out of the power of the enemy, none shut up in the City, none guarded and kept safe from danger, but all doors and places lying open to the destroyer, then *God repents himself for his servants,* that is, he changes his course (though not his decree) and hastens to the rescue of his people thus exposed to trouble on every side.

Again, The word is taken in an ill sense, so, *If he shut up,* is, if he restrain mercy, and expose to misery (*Deut. 32. 30.*) *How should one chase a thousand, and two put ten thousand to flight, except their rock had sold them, and the Lord had shut them up?* How shut them up? As into a prison or under durance except the Lord had delivered them as prisoners into their enemies hands, they had never come into their hands. The people of God are compassed about with such priviledges that they can never be overcome by man, till God with-draws his *safe-conduct*, and gives them to the robbers, and to the spoilers, *Till their rock sells them, and their God shuts them up.* It is an allusion to strong Cities or Forts, which are so built and man'd, so victualled and provided with ammunition, that it is impossible to take them in by assault or siege, unless

lesse the governour or he that hath the power of the place sell, or betray them to the enemy. The people of *Israel*, were so fortified with promises, yea walled about with God himself, that except their rock had sold them, except God had (as we may speak with reverence to his eternall faithfullnesse) betrayed them into their enemies hands, they had continued impregnable. In this sense take the word here, *If the Lord shut up*, that is, if he put men as in a prison, or into the adversaries hand, who can hinder?

Or gather together.

This act of providence is opposit to the former; by that men are shut up as prisoners, and debarr'd of liberty. By this they are gathered together as friends unto one society. Scattering imports affliction, and gathering a return out of affliction. The Apostle *James* dedicates his Epistle, *to the twelve tribes scattered abroad*. And when the Prophet *Zephania* foretells the restitution of the Jews, (chap. 3. 17.) he brings in God *rejoycing over them with joy, resting in his love, joying over them with singing*, and saying (vers. 18.) *I will gather them that are sorrowfull, I will save her that halteth, and gather her that was driven out*. To gather is to restore whether to civill or to spirituall society.

There are two words in the Hebrew noting Church assemblies, whereof this is one; yet it may be interpreted a Commonwealth gathering, as well as of a Church-gathering, of a civil, as well as of spirituall communion. The book *Ecclesiastes* receives its title (*Kobeleth*) from this root. Two reasons may be given of it: Either because that book of the *Preacher* is a collection of excellent observations; *Solomon* there gathered together and congregated many points of highest wisdom. Or because men ought to assemble, or congregate themselves chearfully together, to hear and drink in at the ear those excellent instructions which *Solomon* gives in this book. A learned Interpreter understands all these acts, of affliction; if the Lord cut off by sword, shut up in prison, gather together and bundle men up as fuel to feed the flame of his fierce indignation, though he doth all or any of these things, who can hinder him? The *Chaldees Paraphrast* translates, *though he gather together his armies*, his military forces, though he muster nations together in a warlike manner to vex or destroy each other.

Cobeleth liber in quo collecta omnes scientiae, et ad quem audiendam homines congregantur.

Si congregaverit exercitus aut copias militum, Targ.

Who can hinder him?

The Hebrew is, who can turn him away from his purpose? who can stop him? The Lord hath no peer, no superiour, none to check his counsels; or stay their executions; when he hath determined to do a thing, none can say, it shall not be done, or it shall be done another way: his power is supream, and he can do what he pleaseth without giving an account to any. The summe of all is, that God may destroy, spoil, overthrow, burn, consume if he will; he may do what he will with men and kingdoms, and no man must open his mouth against him: or if any do, it is in vain, or at their own peril. Thus he answers Job, who complained in his afflictions, that the Lord had cut him off, and smote him up, that the Lord had gathered together armies of Chaldeans and Sabeans to destroy him. Though he do (saith Zephaniah) yet know the wisdom of God is unsearchable, higher than heaven, deeper than hell, if he will take these courses with thee, who can hinder him? why dost thou complain as if God had done thee wrong? when as he hath right to do what he will, and he can will nothing but what is right.

Hence Observe first,

All the changes and troubles, the good and evil in the world is from God.

If he cut off, if he shut up, if he gather together; he speaks as if there were no hand of the creature moving in any of these things, but that God himself had done all: Come (saith David, Psal. 46. v. 3.) behold the works of the Lord, what desolations he hath made in the earth. See how the Lord hath made the earth desolate, see how he drives the nations, and scatters the inhabitants of the world. We have a great instance in this kingdom, Behold the works of the Lord, see what desolations he hath made in the North, what in the West, see how many houses are burnt, how many Towns impoverished, how many families utterly ruined. Come, behold what desolations the Lord hath made. Come also and behold what habitations, what reformations he makes in the earth: where you see these done, know it is God that hath done them, as the Psalmist adds in the next words, He maketh wars to cease unto the ends of the earth, he breaketh the bow, and curieth the spear in sunder, he burneth the charriot in the fire. Our eyes are usually much upon second causes, and little upon the first; this makes

us angry and impatient, if we could see God more in what is done, and man lesse we should be much satisfied, or at least lesse troubled, we should possesse our souls in patience whatsoever is done.

Secondly Observe.

God cannot be hindered of his purpose.

What he hath a minde to do shall be done though all the world say no; he gives no account of, nor can any fellowe be laid upon his actions. If he cast one into prison, and enlarge another; enrich one, and impoverish another; give one honour, and lay reproach upon another, who shall say, What dost thou? I have often met with this point of the Sovereignty of God, therefore I only touch it here.

Zophar in the former words moves *Job* to consider the unsearchable wisdom of God, and his unquestionable Sovereignty, *Canst thou by searching finde out God, &c.* If he cut off, and shew up, and gather together, who can hinder him? Thou canst not fathome the bottomlesse abyffe of his wisdom, nor stay him in the resolved actions of his power. He now proceeds to give the reason of both (for the connection may refer to either).

First, He gives a reason why man cannot reach the wisdom of God (*vers. 11.*) *He is vain man.* And as man shews his vanity in noting more then in his assayes and offers to finde out the secrets of God; so his vanity renders him under an utter impossibility to finde out the secrets of God.

Secondly, He gives a reason why, *If the Lord cut off, and destroy, and gather together, if he turn the world up-side down, why man cannot hinder him? He knoweth vain man,* he knoweth that man hath no power to match his, vain man is weak man, and what can weaknesse do against strength, impotency against omnipotency?

Again, Man is vain, and therefore gives the Lord cause (if he should defend to give a reason of himself, or of his actions) *to cut d* *Sophar* *cut off, to gather together, so shew up,* Vain man is wicked man; he seeth wickednesse also, so that if God would not act by his prerogative, man gives him ground enough, legall ground according to the line of humane understanding, to do what he doth. *He knoweth vain man* well enough, both what he is, and what he hath done.

All this *Zophar* intends against *Job*, as if he were the man whom

Vanitas hominum assignatur causa cur secretorum divina providentia suis imparet. Mere. Probari videtur d Deus juro possit succidere, &c. Quia omnium dominum & secretiora dirigat peccata.

Bold,

God

God knew to be vain, and in whom he ſaw iniquity, yea the brutiſhneſſe of a wilde aſſes colt, and was about to break and tame him by thoſe judgements. *Zophar* ſpeaks right in this of mans nature in generall, but his cenſure of *Job*, was erroneous. He was not a vain, but a holy man, neither did God ſee wickedneſſe, but uprightneſſe in him. Grace had changed his nature, and the ſpirit in regeneration had blotted out the image of a beaſt, and ſtampt him with that image, which is after God in righteouſneſſe and true holineſſe. And as for his afflictions they were not ſent to tame him, but to try him, not to break his head-strong ſpirit, but to ſhew that he was already broken, and brought to hand, yea, led by the Spirit of God.

Verſe 11. *He knoweth vain man, he ſeeeth wickedneſſe alſo, will he not conſider it?*

He knoweth.

To know is ſometimes taken for a pure act of intuition; or for the diſcerning of perſons and things, what they are. Sometimes it imports an act mixt, or made up with the underſtanding and affections, and then to know takes in both delight and approbation, *Pſal. 1. 6. The Lord knoweth the way of the righteous*, it is the way, which himſelf hath cut and chalked out for them, therefore he cannot but approve it (*2 Tim. 2. 19.*) *The Lord knoweth who are his*; yea he knoweth who are not his too, but with a knowledge as different as the perſons; he knows the later and rejects them, he knows the former and is pleaſed with them, *Gen. 18. I know Abraham* (ſaith God) *I, there's a man*, I know what an one he is, he is a good man, and he is one I have in my heart to do him good. The Lord alſo knoweth vain man: there is nothing of vain man hidden from God; though there is nothing of vain man, loved or approved by God. *He knoweth vain man, or men of vanity*, ſo the Hebrew. We put it into an epithite, *vain man*.

Vain man.

וְיָדָע
Proprie ſignifi-
cat precipitan-
tiam & temer-
ritatem.

That is, Inconſiderate, raſh, heady, haſty man. With all theſe ſenſes the originall word is filled. When men go head long, and without heed upon buſineſſes, when they move without ſteadineſſe of ſpirit, or an inward ballaſt to keep their thoughts in a due and equall poſe, they are vain men. The Law ſaith (*Exod. 20. 7. 7.*) *Thou ſhalt not take the Name of the Lord thy God in vain* (it

(it

(It is this word) that is, Thou shalt not speak rashly of the things of God, or of God himself, without reverence and premeditation, who God is, and what the errand is thou dealest with God about.

Further, The word signifies *craft, deceit, lying, any falseness, whether of heart or tongue.* The Lord knoweth the falseness, baseness and corruption, as well as the inconsiderateness and rashness that lies in the heart of man; some render it so here from the letter of the Hebrew, *The Lord knoweth men to be liars*, or, *those men who are liars.* Idols are expressed by this word, because they are vain, lying, false gods, *Jon. 3:8. They that follow lying vanities* (which may be either meant of worshipping Idols, or of *antis. Caj.* any sinfull way of practice) *for sake their own mercies.* So *Psal. 62: v. 9. Surely men of low degree are vanity, and men of high degree are a lie, to be layed in the balance, they are altogether lighter then vanity.* Vanity is a light thing, but these men will prove the lighter of the two. The Citizen of Sion is one, *that hath not lift up his soul unto vanity* (*Psal. 24:4.*) unto false worship, or false wayes: he listeth up his soul unto that which is holy, just and good, the righteous law of God.

Novis homines mendaces.
Pagn.

Homines falsi.

In general, this word signifies any evil or sin, especially those which refer to injustice, or our neighbours wrong; *Psal. 12: 2. They speak vanity every one with his neighbour*, that is, they speak injuriously, every one deceiveth or would circumvent and overreach his neighbour. This is to speak vanity with a neighbour (*Psal. 16: 4. I have not face with vain persons*, who are those? he expounds it in the next words, *Neither will I go in with dissemblers*, that is, with men who make a fair shew to their brethren, while their hearts are full of poison against them, who speak one thing and intend another, these are vain persons, and how religious so ever they may seem to be, *their religion is vain too.*

The Lord knoweth vain man, or, He knoweth the vanity of man.
Note

First, *That man is naturally full of vanity, very full of vanity.*

To be called a man of vanity, imports vainest vanity, as it imports, That God is full of truth, when he is called, *The God of truth*, and that he abounds with comfort, when he is called, *The God of all comfort*, so it is an Hebraism noting how full of vanity man is, who is called, *A man of vanity*, and how false he is, who is called, *A man of falsehood*? So the Apost. shews how full of sin that man is, how many thousands he ha

sent, and that himself shall be sent to perdition; whom he calleth, *That man of sin, the son of perdition*; 2 Thessa. 3. They who would have sin, and the fruit of it, perdition, let them go to *that man*. He that would have vanity, needs but go to the heart of any man for it, there's enough and too much of this to be had in the heart of the best, of the wisest man. Generally man hath,

1. Much falsenes of spirit.

2. Much rashnes of spirit. And he hath a double rashnes.

1. Rashnes in not considering his end (*Deut. 32. 29.*) *O that they were wise, that they would consider their later end!* Wisdom looks to what is coming upon us, folly stayes upon what is present with us.

2. Rashnes in not considering the way or means that lead unto a good end. Many a man sees such an end, but goes a way quite contrary, he sets up his resolution for heaven, that's his end, but he walketh hell-ward. This also is vanity, and unlesse timely fore-seen and turned from, will prove the greatest vexation of spirit.

Secondly, Observe,

God is exactly acquainted with the state of man.

He needs not enquire of others, or receive information from abroad. *He knows vain man.* In the former verses *Zophar* asserteth, That man cannot finde out God by searching, here he shews, That God can finde out man without searching. Man knoweth but little of God, therefore he adds, *Canst thou finde him out unto perfection?* but God knoweth all of man, and therefore findes him out *unto perfection*. That's the opposition, *He knoweth vain man, thorough and thorough*. The darkest room in man is light to the Lord (*Jer. 17. 9.*) *The heart of man is deceitfull above all things; there's a depth in mans heart,* and it is a depth of deceitfulness; hence the Prophet sends a challenge to all men, *Who can know it?* Can you finde any man able to finde the bottome of man? The bottome of mans deceitfull heart? The answer waves all man-kinde. God only takes it upon himself. *I the Lord search the heart.* God can finde out all the deceits, and tricks of mans false heart: he can easily discern a Wolf under Sheeps clothing, and rotten bones in a painted sepulchre; he can see a wooden post, to be but a post of wood, though gilded over, and looking very beautifull, the Lord can do it, it is at once his work, and his priviledge, *To know vain man.*

Thirdly,

Thirdly, Take the words in connexion with what went before, *He cutteth off, shutteth up, and gathereth together; For the Lord knoweth vain man.*

Hence observe,

That God is led by his knowledge to doe whatsoever he doth.

When we see so much confusion, such cutting off, such shutting up, such gatherings in the world, we are apt to think no account can be given of these things. Yes, *God knoweth vain man*, he doth not work at a venture: he sees that in man, which justifies him in all the works he doth among all the children of men.

Further, From the connexion, we see the cause of all the troubles which are in the world; of cuttings off and shuttings up, of destructions and devastations: *The Lord knoweth vain man*. It is the vanity of man, which subjects the creature unto vanity, *Rom. 8. The creature groaneth*; we hear creatures groan, Kingdoms and Nations groan, when God cutteth off, and shutteth up, and hudleth them together; But what causeth this doleful groan? Is it not the sin of man? Vain man brings in all these vanities into the world. *We may see the seed of all our troubles in our sins*; The nature of man gives you an account of these workings of God. There is warre, there is famine, and ther's the plague, there are divisions, these vexations, between man and man, friend and friend, Kingdom and Kingdom. All these breed in the heart of man, The Prophet (*Jer. 4. 18.*) speaking of judgements then abroad, saith, *Thou is thy wickednesse, because it is bitter*. Troubles are alwaies bitter, often very bitter; But would you know whence this bitterneffe is, and how to call it? *This wormwood is wickednesse*; You may read what you are, and what you have done, in what you feel and suffer. *Mans sufferings are so much from his sin that they are called his sin.*

He seeth wickednesse also.

That's a second step.

He seeth.

To know is an act of the understanding; to see is an act of sense. These in God are not distinguished, his eye is his understanding, his sight his knowledge. *Zophar* puts it under distinct terms, to shew the exactness of Gods knowledge, *He knoweth vain man, and he seeth*. That knowledge which we have by sight, hath a three-fold advantage of any other natural knowledge. It is

1. The easiest
2. The speediest
3. The surest

} knowledge.

*Videt non discit
Coc,*

An eye-witnesse is farre more authentick then an ear-witnesse is. God seeth, He doth not trouble himself to dig down into a matter by tedious inquiries, he needs no *Committee of Examinations* to make discoveries, he needs not pump and fetch up the hearts of men; *He seeth what waters are in that fountain*, he seeth, he doth not learn. And what doth he see? *He seeth*

Wickednesse also,

*Intrinsicam
malitiam ac
mentale deside-
rium ad ma-
lum importat.*

IN The word is sometimes taken for internal wickednesse, that stock and masse of corruption, which lies close within us; and so it falls in with the former expression, the vanity of mans nature.

But besides, It notes any external evil, and so there is a difference, *The Lord knoweth vain man*, what his nature is, *and he seeth wickednesse*. All the actings of vain men, all the evil counsels and crooked conveyances of their lives, whatsoever wickednesse they do, is immediately before his eye. The Lord knows the vanity that dwells in the heart, and sees the wickednesse that is acted by the hand.

In propriety, the word imports that which is *without reason*; wicked men are unreasonable, or *absurd men*, that's the Apostles character of them (2 Thess. 3. 2.) They can give no account why they are wicked, neither of the end they propose, nor of the means they use. There is no reason in what they doe, nor can they give any true reason why they doe it. Sin is an absurdity both waies, *He seeth wickednesse*.

Hence observe,

All the movings of the sons of men in the waies of sinne are evident to God.

He seeth them. What we doe, we doe in the eye of conscience, and though conscience be now asleep or blinde in the sinners eye, yet conscience hath an open Eagle-eye upon every sin. Now if conscience seeth wickednesse, God seeth it much more, *If our heart condemn us* (and that it could not doe, unlesse it see us) *God is greater then our heart, and knoweth all things*, 1 Joh. 3. 20. Take heed of endeavouring to hide sin from God, or of hoping you sin unseen. That was good counsel which one of the Ancients gave, *It is best to shew that unto God, which we cannot hide*

fro

from him. Shew your wickednesse unto God by confessing it, for you cannot hide it from God by denying or excusing it, *He seeth wickednes also.* There is yet a third act infetred upon the former two.

Will he not then consider it?

Many a carelesse man, knoweth and seeth his own wickednes, or the wickednes of others, but he laieth neither of them to heart: But do you think that God knoweth and seeth wickednesse after the rate of carelesse men? Doth he know and see and not regard? No, *He considers it.* And Zophar is not satisfied to say, *He considers it*, but he puts it home strongly with a Question, *Will he not consider it?* Yes, he will, certainly he will consider the vanity and the wickednesse of man, because he knoweth the one, and seeth the other. What is not known and seen, cannot be considered. One or both those acts are precedaneous to consideration; but some see and know what they never consider; consideration doth not alwaies follow those acts: God looks weightily upon the world, he sees judiciously, critically, he doth not look upon men to gaze at them, but to discern, try, and judge them.

The Hebrew word signifies a clearnesse of observation, and a strength of judgement about the things which are seen, or an act of discerning arising from greatest attention and meditation, *Psalm 37. 10: Thou shalt diligently consider his place*; saith David, prophesying the utter ruine and abolition of a wicked man, though he flourish, yet it is but for a while, anon he is gone; and when he is gone, though thou diligently consider his place, though thou sit down and mark how this man lived, and what he was, yet scarce any foot-steps of him will be found, *It shall not be.* The word is used to the same sense (*Levit. 10. 10.*) where laws are given to the Priests about discerning the defilements of the people, *That they might put difference between holy and unholy, and between unclean and clean*: So to consider as to see a difference between person and person, state and state, is diligent consideration. Thus God *considereth* he distinguisheth man and man; the waies of one man from the waies of another, and the way of every man in it self: He knoweth man as a Judge knoweth upon triall and examination of witnesses, with all the circumstances of the fact.

*Ex vi origina-
lis hac confide-
rationis attentio
quodam, dili-
gens, prudens,
& quasi confi-
liatrix medita-
tio, que unum
ab alio discer-
nitur.*

Zophar.

Zophar in this ſeems to touch *Jobs* ſuppoſed hypocriſie; As if he had ſaid, *Poſſibly thou preſumeſt to impoſe upon God, or put him off with fair ſhews, but thou wilt be deceived; he trieth the ſpirits of the children of men, he weighs all their actions, he will weigh thee out to a grain, he will diſcover the leaſt error and variation from the rule. Therefore never think by thy flouriſhes of profeſſion and out-ſide devotion to deceive him. He knoweth vain man, and ſeeth wickedneſs, Will he not then conſider it?*

Hence obſerve,

God doth not only know and ſee, but he takes deep conſideration of mens wickedneſſe.

The Prophet calls the Jews to conſider their waies (Hag. 1. 7.) as if he had ſaid, I know you have kept many faſts, you have confeſt your ſins, and often arraigned your ſelves in the ears of heaven, but all this while you have not conſidered them, *Goe now and conſider your waies.* God conſiders your waies, and will not you? Gods conſideration is not a bare knowledge of the fact. He conſiders the perſon who, the place where, the time when the fact was committed. He conſiders the means and admonitions, the warnings and cautions, the threatnings and the judgements which providence adminiſtred to prevent it. All theſe are brought into the reckoning, where there is (ſuch as Gods is) a full conſideration. Now conſider this, ye (inconſiderate ones) that forget God, *leſt he tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver,* *Pſal. 50. 22.*

Secondly, To conſider a thing, is to puniſh it. And ſo it answers the former verſe; *The Lord cutteth off, and ſhutteth up;* he makes ſtrange work in the world; Why? *He knoweth vain man, and he ſeeth wickedneſſe alſo, Will not he then conſider it?* that is, Is it poſſible he ſhould know and ſee ſo much wickedneſſe, and not puniſh it? As we ſay to thoſe under our power concerning the faults which we know them guilty of, Well, there will come a time when we ſhall conſider this, that is, A time will come, when we ſhall puniſh you for this, you ſhall ſinde and feel what you have done. Thus God conſiders the ſins of men.

Hence note,

The evils which God knows and ſee, he will certainly puniſh.

Amos 3. 2. You only have I known of all the families of the earth, therefore I will puniſh you for all your iniquities. God knows all the families of the earth, as to know is a work of the underſtanding,

ing, but he knoweth only some (and then he knew but one family of the earth, that of the Jews) as to know is a work of the affections, fruited with works of speciall mercy; When the Lord saith to *Israel*, You have I known, he means, I have shew'd you mercy, I have done you good above all the families of the earth, but now I will bring evil upon you. Abused mercy turns to wrath, and the greater the mercy abused is, the greater is the wrath. The Lord will not cocker his own children, His nearest people, who lie in his bosome, shall have stripes for their sins, and broken comforts for broken Commandments. Will the Lord thus consider the failings and backslidings of his professed friends, and will he not consider the wickednesses of his professed enemies? When *Jehu* was upon the execution of Gods design against the house of *Ahab*, and had slain *Joram* his son, he thus bespoke *Bedkar* his Captain, *I remember how the Lord laid this burden upon him, Surely I have seen the blood of Naboth, and the blood of his sons, said the Lord, and I will requite thee in this plot,* 2 King 9. 29. *I have seen.* God saw, and he saw with an eye of vengeance. He saw blood to requite it with blood (*Psal. 10. 11.*) *The wicked hath said in his heart, God hath forgotten, he hideth his face, he will never see it.* There's self-flattery at the highest: Hence the conclusion is ready vers. 13. *The wicked contemns God, he hath said in his heart, Thou wilt not requite it.* This is the language of a wicked heart. But what saith the heart of *David*, the next words are the language of his heart, *Thou hast seen it, for thou beholdest mischief, and spight, to requite it with thy hand:* As the hearts of men differ, so do their opinions: An evil heart, will not allow God to be a beholder of evil: A good heart is assured that he is not only a beholder, but an avenger of evil. *Let no man deceive you* (saith the Apostle, *Ephes. 5. 6.*) *wish vain words* (And let no man deceive himself, say I, with vain hopes) *for because of these things the wrath of God cometh upon the children of disobedience.* Disobedience is the forerunner of wrath, where sin opens the door, judgement will enter (*Psal. 34. 16.*) *The face of the Lord is against them that do evil.* The face of the Lord is either his anger or his knowledge, *The face of the Lord is against them*, that is, He seeth, and his wrath goeth forth against what he seeth. Seeing them, he is against them; They (perhaps) have cast their own sins, as well as the word of God behinde their backs. But God hath not cast their sins behinde his back, *his face is against them*, and what to

do? To cut off the remembrance of them from the earth. The anger of God is sharp, sharper then a two-edged sword, it doth not only cut, but cut off, it cuts off branch and root, wicked men, and their remembrance from the earth. Then God remembers sin indeed, when he doth not leave a remembrance of the sinner. There was never any sin committed in the world, but God considered it to punish it. The sins of beleevers are considered and punished upon Jesus Christ; Justice went forth against Christ, he was arrested for our debt, and discharged it with the full consideration. Believers may tell God, That Christ hath given him consideration for all their sins. And God tels unbelievers that they must pay the consideration themselves. The holy God cannot see the unholiness of man, and not consider it. Man makes no great matter of sin, but God doth. Man thinks himself good enough, though he be stark naught, and wise enough, though he be a very fool. The next verse leads us into that meditation.

Verse 12. For vain man would be wise, though man is born like a wild ass colts.

For vain man.

כבד

Significat concavum, vacuum nullam habens soliditatem: hinc notat stolidos, vanos, qui ad instar vasis in quo nihil est vacui dicuntur, sc. cerebro & sapientia. Galli vocant tales fols, quasi folles instrumentum tum quod nihil continet, nisi aerem. Bold. Racha eandem habet significationem a ריק evacuated.

The Hebrew word signifieth, hollow or empty, any thing which hath nothing in it, and so a person who hath (as we say) nothing in him. The French call such persons *Fols*, which comes near in sound to our English word *Fools*, but their language takes it up from the latine word *Folles*, signifying a pair of bellows, because the men they mean to decipher by it, are like a pair of bellows, sending out nothing but a blast of winde or air. The word of the text is of the same intendment with *Racha*, of which we read *Matth. 5. 22. He that shall call his brother Racha*, &c. that is, an empty man, a man empty of worth and wisdom, a man that hath no brains in him (as we say) or no goodnesse, such a man as this is *Racha*, and he is *Nabub* too, an empty, hollow fellow.

Hence observe,

A vain man is an empty man.

He hath nothing in him, but that which is good for nothing. There is no natural vacuum (as Philosophers speak) in any part of nature. Neither is there a moral vacuum in any man. But a thing or person is then said to be empty, when void of that with which it should be fill'd; that which hath not the filling, which of

of right or duty, which according to its own constitution, or the just expectation of others, it should have; is empty. The stomach is empty when it hath no meat in it, though it be full of wind. Man is called empty, because (though as full of evil as an egge of goodness, yet) he is not fill'd with good, he is not fill'd with God, with the knowledge of God, with love to, and faith in God. So the Apostle James bespeaks him Chap. 2. 20. *But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?* As if he had said, *Thou empty man, thou that hast but a boast of faith, thou whose faith is fill'd up with good words, not fringed with good works, wilt thou know (thou shalt, whether thou wilt or no) that thy faith is dead.* Where there is life, there is operation; works are not the form but they are the fruit of faith: they are not the essence of a living faith, but they are the evidence that faith lives; and he is to be numbered among the vainest of men, who speaks of his faith, while his works are altogether speechless, or speak nothing but unbelief.

When man fell from God, the devil emptied him of that which he was full of; the image of God in uprightness, and fill'd him with that which was but emptiness, his own image, in unrighteousness. The nature of fallen man in the best notion of it, is but *black paper*; in which nothing is written; in another notion it is *black paper*, written, or blotted rather with evil. And though some notions and general principles (from which conscience works to conviction) remain there, yet they are so weak and languid, so like sparks covered over with, or rather buried in embers and ashes, that they are scarce discernable, and are not only utterly unable without assistance to discern between common truth and error, good and evil, but quite dead to spiritual good. Hence though man hath not lost all; yet he hath as bad as lost all, because he hath lost that which was best; or should make him fit to act that which is good. Things which act not, are but very little better than those which are not. Man having totally lost all holy habits, and all power to act in, or toward holiness, is not wronged, when he is called, *vain empty man*.

And as he is vain, because empty of what he ought to have, so he is more vain, because full of all that which he ought not to have. This empty fulness the Apostle describeth (Rom. 1. 29, 30.) *filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity, with such stuff as this he is filled, of this chaffe and cockle he hath good*

measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over to give into your bosome. The heart of man at the best of nature, is but like a childes pocket full of stones and balls and bables. How empty is that heart which is thus filled? The understanding of man which hath not one holy sentence written in it, is yet written all over with unholy sentences, his judgement and conscience are defiled and flie-blown with false principles, with lies and errours, and if there be any truth there, it is about such things as make him little the wiser, and never a whit the better. Vain man is empty man, unlesse to be full of vain things, or a fulnesse of evil things (which are worse then emptinesse) may go for fulnesse.

אִישׁ נָבוֹל
יָבֵלֵב

Vir vanus cor-
dabitur, vel
cordatus effi-
ciatur.

Cor est fides sa-
pientia, unde
pro sapientia
ponitur.
Vir vanus in
superbiam eri-
gitur. Vulg.

Quanto stupi-
diora sunt bru-
ta tanto cras-
siores polles cor-
de. Plin.
Cordare nihil
aliud est, quam
ingeniosum, sa-
pientem magni-
que consilii vi-
rum evadere.

Would be wise.

There is an elegant *Paranomasia* in the Hebrew, which our language doth not admit: but the literal sense runs thus, *Vain man would have a heart*. This gives us a further evidence, what this vain man is; he is a man without a heart. *Ephraim was a silly Dove without an heart* (Hos. 7. 11.) without judgement to know, and without courage to doe the will of God; here, *vain man would have a heart*. He would be wise if he knew how. The heart is the seat of wisdom, therefore we render it well, *Vain man would be wise*. Mr. Broughton thus, *Vain man would be made hearty*: And the Vulgar, *Vain man is raised up to pride*, or as our Proverb speaks, *Takes heart a grass*. As the heart is the throne of knowledge, so knowledge (unlesse sanctified) is usually a step to pride. *Great knowledge is windy, it puffeth up* (1 Cor. 8. 1.) They who are not edified by knowledge, are elated by knowledge. We have cause to be humbled, because we know so little, and if we once know much, it is alwaies a temptation to, often a cause of pride.

But to our reading, *Vain man would be wise, he would have a heart*. Naturalists observe, That, those creatures which have the the thickest and grossest hearts in bulk, are the most stupid and uningenious. But to have a great heart in a moral sense, noteth greatest wisdom, noblest ingenuity, and (in Scripture language) purest holinesse, *Prov. 15. 32. He that beareth reproof getteth understanding*, so we translate. The Hebrew is, *He that beareth reproof possesseth a heart*, or, *getteth a heart*. A man that will not be reprov'd, hath lost his heart as well as his ear; have but a patient ear

ear to hear, and you may get a heart to know: understanding and knowledge, yea and grace too, come in at the ear.

Vain man would be wiſe, and is not this a good wouling? Is it any part of mans folly that he would be wiſe? What can be better wiſhed then wiſdome? *Solomons prayer* for a heart. When God gave him a blank from heaven, and ſaid, *Ask what I ſhall give thee*; He ſaid, *Give thy ſervants an understanding*, or (according to the letter of the original) *an hearing heart*, 1 King. 3. 5, 9. And was Solomon called *vain man*, becauſe he would be wiſe? Was not his election highly approved by the only wiſe God? How then is it, that *Zophar* upbraids *Job* with this deſign, and cloſely taxeth him as a vain man, becauſe he would be wiſe?

I answer, To deſire to be wiſe is a great point of wiſdome, and whereas *Zophar* makes it a fault, That *vain man would be wiſe*, the faultineſſe muſt be found in one or both of theſe ſenſes.

Fiſt, When man would be accounted wiſe, and affects the reputation of wiſdome, more then the reality of wiſdome. When he doth not ſo much care to be wiſe, as to be thought wiſe. The name is better to him then the thing. *Many have a great opinion of their own wiſdome*, and would have others take up that opinion of them too. *Wiſdome is the beſt thing*. And theſe think themſelves well enough, if they flouriſh in the thoughts of others for wiſe men. The reputation of wiſdome pleaſeth them as much as the enjoyment of it. Thus, to have an itch to be eſteemed wiſer then we are, or wiſe when we are not, is the greateſt piece of folly. It is a loud vanity to affect an opinion of wiſdome among others, or to have an high opinion of our own wiſdome. Thus vain man would be wiſe, and it is his vanity that he would.

Secondly, Man is vain when he would be wiſe beyond his line, or in things above him, not in things about him or fit for him. The ſcope of the plate leads us to this Expoſition. *Canſt thou by ſearching finde out God? Canſt thou finde him out to perfection? He is as high as heaven*, &c. Though ſuch knowledge of God be too high for any man, yet vain man offers at it, and thinks he knoweth nothing, if he know not ſomething which he ought not to know. *Man naturally deſires forbidden wiſdome*, and his deſire is ſeven times ſtronger after it, as it is forbidden, then as it is wiſdome. Many will not hear wiſdome when ſhe calls, who yet would be wiſe in that which they have no call to. *An evil heart cannot deſire any good, but for the ſake of ſome evil that comes with it*. The devil

tempted man to be wiſe in a way of ſin. The firſt ſin came in by an attempt to get forbidden wiſdom, *When the woman ſaw, that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleaſant to the eye, and a tree to be deſired to make one wiſe, ſhe took of the fruit thereof, &c. Gen. 3. v. 6.* But what was the wiſdome which the woman expected from the fruit of this tree? It was not wiſdom to know God, but to be as knowing as God: ſo the Tempter promiſed, *To ſhall be as God, knowing good and evil, verſ. 5.* To know God is eternall life, but a deſire to know, as God, brought in eternall death. The Apoſtle cautions, *not to be wiſe above that which is written,* and adviſeth *Rom. 12. 3. To be wiſe unto ſobriety.* There is an intemperance of the underſtanding, as well as of the affections. There are two extreame about wiſdome, Neglect and affectation. One cares not to know what is neceſſary, what may make him holy, and bring him near to Chriſt. Another cares only to know unnecesſaries. His wiſdome and learning lies in canvaſing *fooliſh and unlearned Queſtions*, which *Paul* bids *Timothy* avoid, *2 Tim. 2. 23.* He pleaſes himſelf with crotchets and curioſities, with meer notions and niceties; about theſe his imagination waxes wanton, and runs riot, yea mad. Or, he muſt be breaking open of Gods cabinet, entring into his counſels, prying into his Ark, he thinks he knoweth nothing worthy a man, unleſſe he know that which is above man. Thus alſo *vain man would be wiſe,* and it is his vanity that he would.

Though he be born as a wilde aſſes colt.

עֵי

*Hic vertitur
pullus tamen
ejuſmodi eſſe
conſtat, qui
oneribus ve-
hendis & agra-
ria cultus a-
ptus ſit.*

That is, like a wilde aſſe, as ſon of man is not a young man, but a man; ſo the *aſſes colt* is not a young aſſe, but an aſſe, any aſſe. The word is often uſed for aſſes under burthen, and fitted for uſe, which colts are not, *Gen. 49. 11. Binding his foal unto the vine, and his aſſes colt unto the choice vine, there to take up their burthen, and undergo their labour.* So then, when he ſaith, *Vain man would be wiſe, though born like a wilde aſſes colt,* his meaning in plain Engliſh is only this, man would be very wiſe, wiſer then man, he would be thought as wiſe as God, at leaſt he would ſearch out the wiſdome of God, and yet indeed *he is a beaſt*, and *Zophar* inſtanceth in the wilde aſſe among all beaſts, becauſe the aſſe among beaſts and the wilde aſſe among aſſes is furtheſt from wiſdome. Some beaſts have a kinde of knowledge, and are very teachable, but the wilde aſſe is not guilty of either. A man of weakeſt parts and thinneſt

thinnest intellectuals is in scorn (though not without blame) called an asse; as a crafty man is (without blame) called a fox.

Man hath wit and subtilty for the world, and to contrive for his lusts, but being degraded from that dignity of a son of God, he walks more like a beast then a man towards God. *Eccl. 3. 18.* *I said in mine heart concerning the estate of the sons of men, that God might manifest them, and that they might see that they themselves are beasts. That they might see; How shall they see it? They will not see it till they are shewed it, and scarce then. I said in mine heart that God would manifest this to them, that they themselves are beasts. As whatsoever good we have, comes from God, not from nature, so it is from God that we must learn the badness of nature. Man is so much a beast, that he cannot know himself to be one till God teach him. And we never learn to be men, till we have learned that we were beasts. Man was made like unto God, but man hath made himself like unto a beast. In three respects man is born like a wilde asses colt, or like a beast.*

1. In regard of his ignorance; Knowledge is proper to those who have reason, yet some who have reason have scarce any thing which can be called knowledge. And though grace repair the image of God in knowledge, yet the best of men may confesse with *Agur* *Prov. 30. 2.* *Surely I am more brutish then any man,* or (more near the Hebrew) *then a man, and have not the understanding of a man.* Wicked men are more brutish then beasts, and holy men are more brutish then a perfect man. The best have somewhat of the beast in them, because they have not the whole understanding of a man in them. *David* charges himself for one *sinfull act*, much more then is it true of a *sinfull state*, *So foolish was I, and ignorant, I was as a beast before thee, Psal. 73. 22.* His dissuasion carries the same meaning, *Psal. 22. 9.* *Be not as the horse, or as the mule which have no understanding.* And so doth his conclusion (*Psal. 49. 20.*) *Man that is in honour and understandeth not, is like the beasts that perish.* Nor as if he meant it of men, quite rob'd of reason. This *not understanding* is to be restrained to the duty of their high place, and the providence of God in raising them to it. He that understands not who raised him to honour, and what his honour leads him to, is the more like or below a beast, because he is so much above other men, *Of all fools a fool in honour looks most unlike a man.*

2. Man is like a beast, or like that beast here expressed, for wantonnesse, lust and vanity. The Church of the Jews in her defection to idolatry is compared to a dromedary and a wilde asse (*Jer. 2. 23, 24.*) *Thou art a swift dromedary, traversing her waies, a wilde asse* (or, *O wilde asse*, so some translate it) *used to the wilderness, that snuffeth up the winde at her pleasure, in her occasion who can turn her away? All they that seek her will not weary themselves; in her moneth they shall finde her.* The Prophet describeth the spiritual wantonnesse of that people in their idolatrous and superstitious mixtures by the natural wantonnesse of the asse, *In her occasion who can turn her away?* she is not to be medled with, when the fit's upon her. *All they that seek her will not weary themselves*, they desist from pursuing her, knowing they may tire themselves, but not take her with all their travel, till somewhat hath tamed her; Then, *In her moneth they shall finde her.* Not that the wilde asse (as an old Rabbin dreams) useth to sleep one whole moneth of the year, and then the hunters used to catch their napping. I shall remit this among Jewish fables. But the moneth she is to be found in, may be the moneth near her sorrows; when her burden takes off her speed; and makes her more easie to be brought to hand. Some reade the text differently, yet the sense is the same. *All they that seek her need not weary themselves, in her moneth they shall finde her.* As if he had said. A little labour will serve to catch her, she is to be had with ease, when or where her lust is to be satisfied. Like this wilde asse were the people of Israel in spiritual wantonnesse, *so set upon it*, that none could turn them from it: The prophets wearied themselves in vain to reclaim them from that lewdnesse; *So prone to it*, that none needed to weary themselves to get their *good-will*, they did even prevent wooing, and went up to the bed of love, or of mysticall fornication with the Nations round about, as soon as they did invite, but with a glance of the eye. And as they were like the wilde asse for spiritual, so they, together with the most of mankind, have undergone as mean a comparison for their pronenesse to, and violent pursuit of corporal wantonnes and uncleannes.

3. Man is like a wilde asse, In regard of stubbornness and unteachableness. Wilde asses are as untractable, as almost any creature. Naturalists tell us, They are all for liberty. The wilde asse is not used to burthens, or brought to hand; he or she are not fed at rack and manger, they eat what the wilderness affords,

and

and are not under any mans care or government; God himself hath given us this character of the wilde asse in this Book (Job 39. v. 5.) *Who hath sent out the wilde asse free? What master hath the wilde asse been apprentie'd to? or who hath loosed the bands of the wilde asse? (from whose hand hath he receiyed his indentures, or been manumitted?) Whose house I have made the wilderness, and the barren land his dwellings. He scorneth the multitude of the City, neither regardeth he the crying of the driver. The horse and ox must serve, the horse traveles, and the ox tills the ground: the ox is under a yoke, and the horse hath a bit and bridle to keep him in subjection; but the wilde asse regardeth not the driver, he cares neither for his whip, nor for his whistle. He is altogether a stranger to discipline, and likes not to hear of any master but himself, or to be a servant to any but his own will. Such is the nature of man, Man is born like a wilde asse colt; he loves to be free, or rather to be dissolute, he cannot endure to be subdued to order; he would know no law but his own will, nor rule but his own desire. Every man is of himself. A sonne of Belial, A sonne without a yoke. Man is so much for insull liberty, that he cares not for true liberty. The liberty he seeks, makes him a bond-slave to corruption. Thus man is born a wilde asses colt, he is ignorant, wanton and licentious.*

So much for the words as we translate.

There is yet another reading of good use, and worthy our examination. 'Tis given out thus, *So shall vain man be made wise, and the asses colt shall be born a man.* This rendering may bear a double interpretation.

First, it may be understood *Ironically*, as a scorn put upon Job, and upon all such as Zophar supposed him to be, vain men. *Vain man shall be made wise, when an asses colt is made a man;* that is *He shall never, or very hardly be made wise; as if he had faith, It is as unheard of, and as strange a thing that such a man as thou, a man so proud and high in thine own thoughts, so vain in thy imaginations, that such an one as thou shouldst be made wise or holy, as it is for a wilde asse to be made a man.* There is a truth in this position, if Zophars supposition had been true. For the distance between mans nature, and grace is greater then that between mans nature and a beaust: *Bare reason is farther from grace then sense is from reason.* It is as easie to change

*Vir vacuus cor-
dabitur, & pul-
lus onagri, ho-
mo evadet.*

Pagn. Jun.

*Pullus onagri
homo nascitur.
Sub eleganti
ironia Sophar
Jobum vili-
cat, vir vacuus
sapiens fiet
quando pullus
onagri homo
evadet. Bold.*

a beast into a man, or to make a beast understand reason, as to change a sinner into a Saint, or to make a beleever of an Infidel. Conversion is not the change of actions only, but of nature. This sentence, *Vain man shall be made wise, when an asse is made a man*, is of the same sense with that Proverb among us, *When the skie falls we shall have larks*, or with this, *Such a thing shall come to passe when a black more is washed white*, or rather with that of our Saviour in the Gospel, *It is easier for a camel to goe thorow the eye of a needle, then for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God*, Mar. 19. 24. Rich men shall go to heaven, when a camel or a cable (so some read) passeth thorow a needle; that is, it is impossible they should by any power of man; and therefore to ease the sharpnesse of the speech, Christ adds by way of explication, *With God all things are possible. It is an hard thing, yea an impossible thing (without God) for a rich man to be saved, or for a vain man to be made wise*. And it is thus hard to make a rich man happy, because he thinks himself happy enough, and to make a vain man wise, because he presumes he is wise enough. *Seest thou a man wise in his own conceit, there is more hope of a fool than of him*, Prov. 26. 12. or in the language of this text, there is as much hope of a beast as of him. A man had better be ignorant, then conceited of his knowledge. *An opinion of knowledge keeps out true knowledge*. Not only instruction, but correction is lost on such Opinionists. (Prov. 27. 22.) Though thou shouldest bray a fool in a mortar among wheat with a pestel, yet will not his foolishnesse depart from him. He means it not of a natural fool, nor of one that is convinced of his foolishnesse, but of him (who is the great fool of all) that is in love with his own fancies and shadows of wisdom: take such a fool and beat him to pieces in a mortar, that is, let him be afflicted, till he be almost destroyed, yet his folly departs not from him; you may as soon make a beast a man, as such a fool to understand, *There is but one greater evill to reall knowledge then ignorance, and that is a conceit of knowledge*. Only he that can drive a camel thorow a needles eye, and make a beast a man; Only he that calls those things which are not, as if they were, can make vain man wise, and him to be holy, who is not.

Flagellis erudietur. Equam-
que excors Ex-
pers omnium
scientiarum
causatur, et
nam per Dei
gratiam reddi-
tur intelligent.
Vatabl.

Secondly, This rendering, *So shall vain man be made wise, and the wilde asse shall be turne a man*, sheweth us the effect of those afflictions, which God laieth upon man. He considers their sins to

punish

punish and chasten them; What of that? So shall vain man be made wise, &c. As if he had said, The end of the chastening of God upon man, is to make him wise, or (as the Prophet speaks, *Isa. 27. 9.*) By this shall the iniquity of man be purged, and this is all the fruit to take away his sinne, his vanity, that the wilde asses colt may be born a man, or reborn. This interpretation gives us the very language of the new Testament, about the grace of regeneration, or a new birth, *Joh. 3. 5, 6.* In which this wonder is continually wrought, *A wilde ass is born a man.*

Hence observe,

That afflictions blessed and made effectual by God, make a gracious change in mans.

How many ignorant men have with correction received instruction? How many proud men have been made humble, and of carnal spiritual? How many unruly spirits have been brought in compasse, and stubborn ones subdued with a rod? The rod and the Word work miracles, when God works with them. If God speak to a dry tree, it shall bring forth these Almond blossoms, and heavenly fruits, and unlesse he speak with the Word, we continue dry, yea dead, earthly and unfruitful. *Before I was afflicted I went astray, saith David; David wander'd like a sheep, and was as a beast; affliction made him a man, and turned him home.* Ephraim crieth out, *Jer. 31. 18. Thou hast chastised me, and I was chastised,* importing either the strength of the affliction: when God will afflict, no man can stay his hand, or take off his blow: Or the effect of the affliction, *Thou hast chastised me, and I was chastised,* that is, I was bettered by my chastisements. The Lord chasteneth some, who are not chastised, there is no change made, they do not mend with beating. This I rather pitch upon, as the meaning of Ephraims bemoaning acknowledgement, *Thou hast chastened me, and I was chastened:* and observe how he speaks of himself under the notion of a beast, *I was as a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke,* I could not endure to come under discipline, I could not abide the yoke, or submit unto thy will, *Turn thou me, and I shall be turned, for thou art the Lord my God;* But is this the language of a beast? No, when once the Lord had chastened him, he spake like a man, whereas before he spake and did like a beast, even like a bullock unaccustomed to

the yoke, but now he hath the voice of a man, yea the voice of a Saint, Turn thou me, and I shall be turned for thou art the Lord my God. O happy chastenings, which make such changes! And chastenings have many advantages to make such changes, to turn beasts into men. For

1. They imbitter the world to us, the world is such a beast that it makes men beasts, and when the world is taken out of our hearts, the beast departs from us, and is taken out of our hearts.

2. Afflictions make sinne more visible, Iudgements realize the evil that is in sinne, and shew us the poison of that serpent.

3. Afflictions are proper to tame our wildnesse, and take down the loftinesse of our spirits. *Nebuchadnezzar* for his pride was (in a manner, in his manners he was before) turned into a beast. His outward shape was not changed (The Poets *Metamorphosis* was in morals, and so was this in the Prophet) but he lived like a beast, or he led the life of a beast: Some for sinne are put to live like beasts, and all men in sinne live like beasts. *Nebuchadnezzar* living among beasts, and like a beast, learned to be a man. For at the end of the dayes, saith he, *Nebuchadnezzar* lift up mine eyes to heaven, and mine understanding returned unto me (*Dan. 4. 24.*) Thus *Nebuchadnezzar* was born a man, I do not say he was born an holy man, but a man he was born, His understanding returned unto him, and his Counsellors and his Lords sought unto him, they owned him then not only as a man, but as a Monarch. Afflictions civilize most, and they spirituallize many. They are more brutish then beasts, who (as the Prophet describes them, *Isa. 51. 20.*) continue like wilde bulls full of the fury (and empty of the spirit) of the Lord, when they are entangled in these nets, or taken with these roils.

And because there is so great a tendency in affliction to humble and purifie vain man from his sinne, therefore affliction is brought in as a great aggravation of the sinne of man. How beastly are they that will not return from their folly, when they are smitten and broken with iudgements? Hence that iterated expostulation. (*Amos 4.*) I have smitten you, &c. yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the

the Lord; God himſelf doth even wonder that the beaſt ſhould not turn man, when he had been ſo long under the burden, and had receiver ſo many blows. 'Tis reaſonable for us of this Nation, to conſider this point, We have been like wilde aſſes colts, ignorant, vain, obſtinate, and unteachable; God hath conſidered theſe things, he hath written his obſervation of them in bloody characters. O that this might be the fruit, that ſuch as have been empty, and without hearts, might learn wiſdome, that ſuch as have been wilde aſſes, might be born men, yea good men. This would make all our loſſes gain to us, and our judgements mercies, ſuch a change as this would change our water into wine, and all our ſorrows into joy.

Thus I have done with the firſt part of *Zophars* ſpeech, wherein he reproves *Job*, and argues the matter with him. He is now ready to alter his ſtile, and in ſtead of conviction prepares advices for him.

JOB Chap. 11. Vers. 13, 14.

If thou prepare thine heart, and stretch out thine hands towards him.

If iniquity be in thine hand, put it far away, and let not wickednes dwell in thy tabernacles.

Est parameſis, qua Jobum hortatur, ut ad Deum redeat ampliffima illi boni pollicens. Merc.

IN the former part of this Chapter, Zophar confuted the opinion of Job, and reprov'd him for alſerting and ſtanding cloſely to it. In this he gives him counſell and direction, his counſell is contained in theſe two verſes. Toward the receiving of which, he propoſeth not a few encouragements, in the words which follow. The whole may be formed up thus.

Thou oughteſt willingly to hear, and chearfully to obey that counſel in the hearing and obeying whereof, thou ſhalt be freed from evil, and enjoy all deſirable bleſſings and good things.

But if thou hear and obey my counſel, if thou prepare thine heart, and ſtretch out thine hands towards God, if thou put the iniquity of thy hand far away from thee, thou ſhalt be freed from all evil, and enjoy all deſirable bleſſings and good things.

Therefore thou oughteſt willingly to hear, and chearfully to obey my counſel.

The concluſion of this ſyllogiſme is delivered in the 13. and 14. verſes. The aſſumption, (namely that, in preparing his heart, and praying unto God, he ſhould be bleſſed) is laid down, in the 15, 16, 17, 18, and 19th verſes; which is illuſtrated by the oppoſite and contrary condition of the wicked, at the 20th verſe, *But the eyes of the wicked ſhall fail, and they ſhall not eſcape, and their hope ſhall be as the giving up of the gholt.*

If thou prepare thine heart.

The words are an hortatory ſuppoſition, and (as was toucht before) we may obſerve that the three friends of Job, caſt their diſcourſes in the ſame mould, and inſiſt in the ſame method. Their ſpeeches are all of one frame and piece, as if they had ſpoken by conſent, or had before-hand reſolved upon a joynt-mannaging,
of

of their arguments and proceedings. While they all hit the ſame nail, they hope at laſt to drive it home to the head. As I have ſhewed *Eliphaz* in the fifth, and *Bildad* in the eighth Chapter, ſo now I muſt ſhew *Zophar* after he had ſufficiently, if not bitterly reproved *Job*, adminiſtring holy and whoſome advice and counſel.

If thou prepare thine heart.

As if he had ſaid, Come (friend) leave off thy complaining and diſputings, leave off thy ſelf-juſtifying and overweenings of thy own worth, Be perſwaded at laſt to lay down thy weapons, and ſubmit thy ſelf, give over reaſoning and fall to praying. Prepare thy heart to ſeck God.

The Vulgar reads it, as a charge brought againſt him, and not *Tu autem* for: as a counſel given to him, *Thou haſt ſtiffened thine heart againſt* *maſſi cor tuum;* God, and thou haſt ſtretched out thine hands toward him: As if *Job* &c. Vulg.

had ſtill continued contumacious and obſtinate againſt God, after all theſe breakings. To firm or ſtrengthen the heart, is to harden the heart, or to be inſenſible under the hand of God. But rather take it according to our tranſlation, as a direction or counſel, *אִם לֵבְךָ מִן־יְהוָה* *thou prepare thine heart*, that is, if thou putteſt thine heart into order, or if thou fix thine heart, ſo the word is tranſlated (*Pſ. 57. fixum eſt cor* *v. 7. & Pſal. 108. 1.) My heart is fixed, O God, my heart is fixed, I will ſing and give praiſe.* An unfixed, or an unſetled heart, muſt needs be an unprepared heart. *Fixedneſſe of heart is preparatory to preparation of heart.* A fixed heart (and that only) is fitted to move towards, and to follow after God. It is very hard to aim right at that which is in motion, but it is harder for him that is in motion to aim right. *The ſteady man hits the mark.*

Yet more diſtinctly conſider,

Fiſt, What is here meant by the heart?

Secondly, What by the preparing or fixing of the heart?

Fiſt, The heart is not here taken in its naturall capacity, for that part of the body, which *Philophers* call *the firſt living*, and *the laſt dying in man*. But by the heart (in a metaphor) we are to underſtand the ſoul, or the whole inward man: For as the heart is the principall part of the body, ſo the ſoul is the principall part of man, and the failings and wounds of the ſoul are to the whole man, like the failing or wounding of the heart in
reference

reference to the outward man.

Again, As the heart in Scripture signifies the whole soul or inward man, so it is put distinctly for those noble faculties of the soul, 1. *The understanding.* 2. *The will.* 3. *The memory,* and for a fourth, which is a result or compound of them three, *The conscience.* The Apostle means the understanding, while he saith of the Gentiles, (*Rom. 1. 21.*) *Their foolish heart was darkned:* they had a knowledge of God in the creature, but they waxed wanton, and became vain in their imaginations, and therefore *their foolish heart, that is, their understanding was darkned;* God sent them a *spiritual cloud,* because they did not improve *natural light.* They who abuse light are most usually and most justly left in darkness. But to the point, the same Apostle attributes *blindness of heart,* that is, of understanding, to the same Gentiles, *Ephes. 4. 18.*

2. The heart expresseth the will, in that answer of Christ to the Lawyers Question, *Which is the great commandment in the law?* *Mat. 22. 36.* *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God (saith Christ, v. 37.) with all thy heart, with all thy soul, with all thy mind,* that is, with thy will, with thy affections, with thy understanding, and with all of each of these. And as the heart of man is his will, so also is the heart of God. *I have sought me a man (saith God, 1 Sam. 13. 14.) after my own heart.* He is such a man as I would have, he is so much after my will, *That he will perform all my wills.*

3. The heart of man is his memory. (*Psal. 119. 11.*) *Thy word have I hid in my heart:* Memory is the repository or store-house of the word, The treasury of holy truths, *Mary hid the words of Christ there,* *Luk. 2. 19.*

4. The conscience, which hath in it the light of the understanding, the motions of the will, and the recognitions of the memory, comes under the notion of the heart (*Psal. 51. 12.*) *Create in me a clean heart, O God;* that is, purify my conscience, set that right; *Dauids conscience* was extremely out of frame; his linne had reduced it back into a kind of chaos; this made him pray for a new creation: Ordinary repairs, or a little mending would not serve his turn. But if this Scripture convince not the heart, for the conscience, yet that of the Apostle *John* doth beyond all exception. *If our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart,* (*1 Joh. 3. 20.*) and so doth that of *Job,* (*Chap. 27. 6.*) *Adversaries (that is, my conscience) shall not reproach me so long as I live.* It

is conscience which chideth and reproacheth the sinner, and tells him his own. It is conscience that speaks fair, and gives good words to those who walk uprightly, *My heart* (saith upright Job) *shall not reprove me*; that is, I have walked in my integrity, therefore I am not afraid what conscience can do, or say against me.

When Job is advised to *prepare his heart*, we must enlarge it to the whole inward man, not fix upon any one of these faculties in opposition to, or exemption from the other.

If thou prepare thine heart.

This preparation consisteth in two things.

1. In removing and sweeping out the filth which is in the heart. *Mat. 15. 19.* *Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies.* Now, as it is the continual work of an evil heart to send out these; so it is the first work of preparing a good heart, to purge and cast out these. They come out of the heart easily, but, O how hard is it, to thrust them out! yet this must be done, or else nothing is done towards the preparation of the heart. If you were to prepare an house for the entertainment of a great Prince, What would you do? Would not your first care be to carry out the dirt, and wash the floor, Down with the cobwebs there, (cries one) away with every unclean thing. (saith another) Thus we begin to prepare our houses for such noble entertainments. Again, when you are to prepare a plot of ground to receive seed, what do you? Do you not first pick out the stones, pull up and bury the weeds, and then sow? Thus the Lord dealt with his vineyard (*Isa. 5. 2.*) *He fenced it, and gathered out the stones thereof, and then planted it with the choicest vines.* He gathered out the stones before he planted it, he would not set vines among stones. The first work in all preparations is to get out the rubbish, and remove impediments.

2. The heart wherein Christ is to be lodged, must not be a meer *vacuum*, only swept and empty: holiness doth not consist in negatives, in removing and throwing out of evil, though that be a great part of it: Therefore the next part of preparation is the adorning and beautifying of the heart, the quickning and heightning of it to those duties and services which God calls for. If you entertain a Prince, or but a special friend, as you sweep

O

your

*Dicit cor tuum,
non labia tua,
quod hypocrita-
rum est, hortan-
tur Jobum ut
ad Deum re-
deat non sine
simulaculo.*

Dicit. Verbum

כח

*semper accipi-
tur in bonum,*

your house, and wash away the dirt, so you put up your *Arras hangings*, lay on your *Persian carpets*, set up your *Ivory beds*, uncover your rich *stools*, bring out your *Plate and ornaments*, till then the house is not prepared. Thus to the point in hand, the preparation of the heart consists in the actings of grace, in opening of all your spiritual stores, in putting on the richest furnitures of the inward man, in being clothed with the Spirit, in shewing forth the virtues of the Lord Jesus Christ. If you be not thus beautified, as well as emptied, you are unprepared.

It is said (*Mat. 12. 44.*) *That the evil spirit returning to his house, whence he came out, when he is come, findeth it empty, swept and garnished.* No marvel if it were empty, for who would dwell in a house, which hath had the devil for its tenant? But how came it swept, and with what broom? How came it to be garnished, and with what furniture? Must a house be made clean to entertain an unclean spirit? Must it be swept to receive him, who hath fill'd the whole world with filth and rubbish?

This emptying, sweeping and garnishing is fit for such a guest. A heart emptied and swept of goodnesse, a heart adorned and garnished with noisome lusts (such are the ornaments and garnish there meant) is a heart prepared for the devil. In this manner, but with the most contrary materials must the heart be prepared for God. It must be emptied and swept of sinne, it must be garnished with grace, before the King of glory enters in.

In these two acts, preparation of the heart consists, and without both it is imperfect: if the room be not cleansed, he who is of purer eyes than to behold any unclean thing, will not lodge in it. God and sin cannot dwell together, *What communion is there between light and darknesse, between Christ and Belial?* Neither is it enough (if it were possible) to cast out sin, and put off the old man, unlesse you put on the new. Some attempt to put the new man upon the old. They are willing (in this sense) to be clothed upon, but cannot endure to be unclothed. *Holinesse upon unholinesse is the disguise, not the habit of a holy man.* Others would be unclothed, so they might be spared this pains to be clothed upon. It is easier with them not to do evil, then to do good. *Evil laid aside, and good not admitted or acted, makes but half (if so much of) a good man.* A due preparation of the heart consists in putting off every evil, and in not doing any;

in

in putting on all, and in doing every good.

This is the work which *Job* is advised unto, The summe of all safe and wholsome counsel is contracted into this one sentence, *Prepare thy heart.*

Hence observe,

First, *God must have the heart.*

He made the heart, therefore he deserves it. He gives us his heart, therefore he deserves ours. Whatsoever we give him without a heart, we give him nothing. *There is only so much of value in what we do, as there is of heart in it.* It is the voice of our hearts, not the mulick of our tongues that God regards, *My sonne, give me thine heart*; God must have your best piece, for he is the best of all.

Secondly, *Any heart will not serve Gods turn; it must be a prepared heart.*

He accepts not the best service without a heart: How then should he accept an evil heart, which can doe him no service, or none but ill? As a good heart is the best part of man, so an evil heart is the worst, and there is no heart, but is one of these; That which is not good is evil, and that which is not prepared, is not good. Therefore the heart, which is a gift fit for God, must be a prepared heart.

Thirdly, *Our preparations for God must begin at the heart.*

When *Zophar* would direct *Job*, he saith, *If thou prepare thine heart*, never think to cleanse your hands before you cleanse your hearts: who can sweeten the stream, while the fountain is bitter, or make the fruit good, while the tree is evil? (*Act. 15. 9.*) He put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith: Where the holy Ghost begins, we must: They who agree not in purity of heart, shall differ for ever. They who agree in purity of heart, though they disagree in opinion, should put no difference (I am sure not such wide ones as now are) between themselves. The truth is, where hearts are really purified by faith, their differences in opinion cannot be very wide; for they who are so wide that they cannot be saved, were never purified: When once the heart is purified, head and hand cannot continue very long, or very much unpurified. For though purifying begins alwaies at the heart, yet it never stays there. Many a man hath purified his head from false principles. (he is very orthodox) and his hands from false practices (he is very honest)

whose heart was never purified. But there is no man; nor ever was, whose heart is purified, but his head and hands, were, are, or shall be purified, even in this present life. A man whose heart is prepared cannot persevere to the end in doing or holding evil; But the reason of all the evil both done and held in the world, is, because the heart is not prepared. So it is said of Rehoboam 2 Chron. 12. 14. *He did evil in the sight of the Lord, Why? Because he prepared not his heart to seek the Lord.* Possibly he made some outward preparations, but he prepared not his heart. And when Simon Magus, who made such haste to be washed in the water of baptism, (*Act. 8.*) did soon after appear so foul; where lay the fault? He had made such an outward profession, that the Apostle could not refuse him, his tongue was as good, and 'tis like he shewed as fair a hand as the rest did, Why then did Simon Magus fail? The Apostle tells him (and us) the reason (*vers. 21.*) *Thine heart is not right in the sight of God*; He had washed his outside, but his inwards were unclean. *The heart is the worst part of man, till it be mended, and then 'tis the best.* Where most evil lieth, there we must begin to be good; All is good, when that is good which is the seat, the nest of all evil. When Christ was coming into the world, to accomplish that great work of redemption, he saith (*Heb. 10. 5.*) *Loe I come (in the volume of thy book it is written of me) to doe thy will, O God, a body hast thou prepared me, &c.* Christ needed not to have a heart prepared him, his heart was prepared from all eternity, there was never any, the least unpreparedness in his heart, for he was holy in his temporal conception, and he was the holy Son of God, by an eternal generation; and therefore he doth not say, *An heart hast thou prepared me*, no, he might say (in the highest sense with the Psalmist) *My heart is ready, O God, my heart is ready.* What needed he then to fit him for a sacrifice? Only a body capable of sufferings. He had a heart fit both to do and suffer, but he wanted a body: *He was in the form of God*, therefore a body, a suite of flesh and blood, such as the *Divine Nature* never wore before, must be provided for him, and provided it was: God himself was at the whole cost to make it (man contributed nothing) *A body hast thou prepared me, O God.* But when man is called to do the will of God, he hath a body prepared, but he wants an heart. He hath but need to pray, *Lord prepare an heart for me*; if the heart be prepared, the body is. All the distempers and unserviceable-
ness

ness of our bodies arise from the unpreparedness of our hearts. The heart carries the whole man with it, if once that be ready, all is ready.

Fourthly, Observe, *God will not doe us good, until we are fit to receive good.*

Grace is free, yet grace prepares us for grace. As the meet favour of God bestows the first grace upon us, so the exercise of grace fits us for further favour. *If thou prepare thine heart*, then, &c. In all the publike reformation recorded in Scripture, God calls his people to set their hearts right (1 Sam. 7. 3.) *Put away the strange gods and Ashtaroth from among you, and prepare your hearts unto the Lord.* The want of this is complained of, as the cause of all their wants. Hence the Prophet prayeth (Psal. 78. 8.) that they might not be as their fathers, *A stubborn and rebellious generation, A generation that set not their hearts aright.* While our hearts are not right with God, no marvel if things go wrong with us. All the unevenness of our lives, whether in what we do, or in what we enjoy, ariseth from the unevenness of our hearts. How can they expect to receive good, who are totally unfit to do good? *The lips of the wise disperse knowledge, but the heart of the foolish (doth) not so;* or (nearer the original) *is not right,* Prov. 15. 7. This later translation expounds the former, for the reason, why he cannot do so, is, because his heart is not right, *The lips of the wise disperse knowledge,* they scatter or sow the good seed of knowledge: but the heart of a fool is not right, therefore he cannot do so, & because his heart is so unprepared to do good, he receives no good. This was the stop, or gave check to that good work of reformation 2 Chr. 20. 33 much was done, *Howbeit the high places were not taken away,* why what hindered? *The people had not as yet prepared their hearts unto the God of their fathers,* they were not ready for God. And that may be the very reason, why at this time we go on so slowly in duty, and why our mercies come on so slowly, we are not yet prepared for the God of our fathers; our pride, our envyings, our worldliness, and creature interests, are so great, & stick so close to us, that we are unfit for the work God calls for at our hands, and for the mercy which we are waiting for at the hand of God.

Fifthly, How is it that Zophar saith, *If thou prepare thine heart?* he puts the work upon Job. Who is able to prepare his own heart? We may as well create a world, as convert our selves. We may as soon be our own *Saviours,* as our own *preparers.*

It is indeed Gods work to prepare the heart, yet Zophar gives good counsel to Job, when he saith, *If thou prepare thine heart.* The Pelagians of old, with their successours in that perswasion, Papists and Arminians, mis-interpret texts of like importance with this, to prove that the conversion of man to God begins at man; or that the grace of God is subsequence, or but a secondary to the self-preparations of man. Whereas such Scriptures shew us our duty, not our ability, what must be done, not what we can do. A naturall man hath no strength, a godly man cannot improve his strength without assistance. *Without me* (saith Christ) *ye (my Disciples) can do nothing,* Joh. 15. 5. Our preparations of heart doe not at all begin at us, nor are they compleated by us.

Hence observe,

We may be called to doe what is not in our power to doe.

The Apostle exhorts, *Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling* (Phil. 2. 12.) He seems to give a strange reason in the next verse, *For it is God that worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure* (v. 13.) our inability to work doth not exempt us from working, we having a promise from God to make us able: we are commanded to doe what we have not so much as a will to doe, because God is engaged to work in us both to will and to doe; and that, not according to any predispositions of ours, but *of his own good pleasure.* Our master in heaven shews us our duty, and then helps us to perform it. He calls us to prepare our hearts, and then prepares them for us. For they who have received grace, have not a full power to obey this call, and they who are in nature have none at all, yet it is not in vain to say to a man of the one state, nor of the other, *Prepare thine heart.* Though the later be dead in sins and trespasses, yet it is neither improper, nor unprofitable to bid him turn from sin, because while we speak to the ear, God saith he will speak to the heart, and accompany the Word with his own power, yea *make the word of man the power of God unto mans salvation.* And though the former cannot fully obey this call, nor prepare his heart without new actual concurrences, and fresh receipts of grace, yet by such invitations God awakens and stirs up those old habits of grace, which lay slumbering, or unacted, and causeth such to stir up themselves, who were asleepe, or very unactive. The Prophet complained *Isa. 64. v. 7. That no man stirred up himself to take hold of God.* As man must

must stirre up himself, yet he stirs not, till God stirre him, so man must prepare his heart, yet he cannot prepare it, till God prepareth him, *Psal. 10. 17. Lord, thou wilt prepare their hearts, thou wilt cause thine ear to hear.* It is not only the priviledge, but the purpose of God to prepare our hearts; yet if we desire he should, we must set our selves to prepare our own hearts. *David* in that gratulatory prayer for the free oblations and contributions of the people toward the building of the Temple, thus bespeaketh God, *Keep this for ever in the imagination of the thoughts of the heart of thy people, and prepare their heart unto thee, 1 Chron. 29. 16.* He bleisseth God for the present preparaion, he begs of God to continue their prepared hearts in a gracious frame, and yet as if nothing had been done, he prayeth for further preparation. *Pro. 16. v. 1. The preparations of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue is from the Lord.* You see all is from the Lord, the root and the fruit, heart-work and tongue-work, our thoughts which are the moulds of action, and our words which are the image of our thoughts; God works at the bottome of the heart, and at the tip of the tongue, yet man must not sit still; that God works must not make us idle: when we hear that God doth all, we must not take up resolutions to do nothing, no, the Lord in speaking thus, at once directs us what to do, and assists us to do it. *Grace* is as much magnified in working in us, as in saving us without works; that's the reason why we are so often called to duty, though we have no power. *If thou prepare thine heart,*

And stretch out thine hands towards him.

Or *Spread thy palms to him*, so the letter of the original.

The word which we translate, *Stretch out*, signifies sometimes an affected ostentation, or the spreading of a thing to have it seen. Hence one of the Ancients expounds this place as a reproof upon *Job*, giving the meaning of it thus, *Thou hast stretched forth thine hands towards him*, that is, *Thou hast vaunted of thy works of piety, justice and charity, thou hast spread thy palms, yea thy plumes before God, and shewed him what work thou hast done him.* Some tell us that the word *Pharisee*, is derived from this (*Parash*) to lay open, to unfold and stretch out: and there is a double reason given of it: First, because the *Pharisees* wore the law openly, with broad enlarged phylacteries: Or secondly, because they loved to do all their duties openly, they would pray in the open streets,

וּפְרַשְׁתָּ אֶלָּי
כַּפֶּיךָ

Expandere manus est opera pietatis ostentare & vanilo-
rs. Greg.

streets, they gave alms with sound of trumpet, and Christ tells them to their teeth, *That all they did was to be seen of men*, they kept their evil hearts close, and dost not let them be seen; but for their good works they cared not who saw them, or rather their care was that all should see them; thus they spread out their hands. Christ adviseth in the matter of alms; to keep the hand close, *Let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doth* (Mat. 6. v. 31.) The right hand is the working and giving hand, our good works, especially our gifts should be done in such secrecy, that the left hand which is so near a neighbour, must not know what is done by the right. But the Pharisees made not only their *left hand*, that is their next neighbours, but town and countrey know what their *right hands* had done. *He that desires all should be known, which his right hand doth, doth nothing at all with a right heart.* It is dangerous to hide the talents which God lends us, but it is as much our duty to hide the talents (such are gifts to the poor) which we lend to God, as it is to lend them. These talents are best traded, when wrapt in a napkin, or buried in the earth.

Some conceive Zophar in these words taxing Job with vain ostentation of his good deeds, *Thou hast stretched out thine hands*, that is, Thou hast told God stories of thy charity, of thine alms, &c.

Manuum expansionis perinet ad habitum sentis. Phil.

Others interpret thus, *Thou hast stretched, &c.* that is, thou hast carried thy self insultingly, furiously, madly toward God; stretching forth of the hands, is a posture of fury; An uncomposed minde is often visible in the uncomposednesse of an outward member.

But thirdly, waving those two, *stretching forth of the hands*, as it is here given in counsell, hath a three-fold use in Scripture.

1. It is a gesture of sorrow, mourners stretch out their hands (Jer. 4. 31.) *I have heard a voice as of a woman in travail, and she anguisheth, as of her that bringeth forth her first childe. The voice of the daughter of Zion that bewaileth her self, that spreadeth her hands, saying, Woe is me now, for my soul is wearied, because of the murderers.*

2. It is a gesture of bounty or pity; Stretching out the hands, implieth a readinesse and willingnesse to receive to favour, or to shew favour (Isa. 65. 2.) *I (saith the Lord) have spread out my hands all the day unto a rebellious people*; that is, I have expressed my

my willingneſſe to receive and entertain them, to pardon them, and do them good. *Open hands are the emblem of an open heart, and arms ſtretched out, of a readineſſe to embrace.* When we ſtretch out our hands to God, it ſpeaks our willingneſſe to receive his commands, and when God ſtretcheth out his hands to us, it ſpeaks his readineſſe to pardon our ſins, and ſupply our wants.

3. Stretching out the hands is a *prayer geſture*. As he that helps ſtretcheth forth his hand, ſo doth he that would be holpen. When *Moses* went out from the preſence of *Pharaoh*, he ſaith, *As ſoon as I am gone out of the city, I will ſpread abroad my hands unto the Lord, and the thunder ſhall ceaſe, &c.* *Exod. 9. 29.* That is, I will pray unto the Lord, that the thunder may ceaſe, and I am aſſured it ſhall. So *1 King 8. 22.* at the dedication of the Temple, *Solomon* ſtood before the altar, and ſpread forth his hands towards heaven. *Let us liſt up our heart with (our) hands unto God in the heavens (Lam. 3. 41.)* or according to the letter of the Hebrew, *Let us liſt up our hearts to our hands, to God in the heavens;* that is, let our hearts be liſted up, as well as our hands. Some liſt up their hands while their hearts hang down in prayer. The Apoſtles charge *1 Tim. 2. 8.* clears it further, *I wiſh that men pray every where liſting up holy hands without wrath and doubting.* Heathens have obſerved and deſcribed this poſture of ſuppliants to their Idol-gods, bowing their knees, holding up their hands and praying.

*Est habitus
opem imploran-
tis & orationis
ſignum.* Merc.

*Nixa genibus
ſupinas manus
ad deos tenden-
tes videntesque,
&c. Liv. 1. 39.
Ac ſupplex ge-
minas tendens
ad ſidera pal-
mas.* Syl. Ital.

So that putting both together, *Prepare thine heart, and ſtretch out thine hands towards him,* are plainly this, *Prepare thine heart and pray, or prepare thine heart to pray.* The ſign is put for the thing ſignified, or the geſture uſed in that duty for the duty it ſelf in which it is uſed. There are four ſignifications which *ſtretching forth the hands* may have in prayer. I will touch upon that (only to ſhew the vanity of it) which the *ſuperſtitious Papiſts* do much inſiſt upon; we pray (ſay they) ſtretching forth the hands or arms, to expreſſe the *croſſe of Chriſt*, becauſe when a man ſtretcheth out his arms, his body makes the figure of a croſſe. This they make one reaſon why ſtretching out the hands is appointed or accuſtomed in prayer. But how they who lived where ſuch a kinde of death as crucifying was never heard of, as *Zophar* and *Job* did; and ſo many hundred years before Chriſt died upon the croſſe, how they (I ſay) could in prayer form their bodies intentionally, to that which was never formed in their minds, the

croſſe of Chriſt is beyond all conjecture, and is no point at all of faith. To paſſe that, there are (I ſay) four ſignificancies in it.

1. Stretching out the hands towards God in praier, implieth a reſignation of our ſelves to the will and work of God. It is as much as to ſay, *Theſe hands of mine, which I have heretofore imploied about the work of the devil, and the ſervice of ſinne, now, Lord, I dedicate them and their work wholly to thy ſelf.* They who give their hearts to God, will not ſtick at giving their hands. Holy prayer offers up the whole man to God, and deſires him to take the ſpoils of all. A godly man hath not a finger at his own diſpoſe. The hand being the great organ or inſtrument of action, the ſtretching out of our hands to God, may well imply our readineſſe to act wholly at his direction. *The ſureſt way to write our ſelves ſervants to God, is to give him our hands.*

2. Stretching forth of the hands, ſignifieth a holy ſtriving with God in prayer, or the earneſtneſſe and ſtrong intention of our ſpirits in prayer. A man that ſtriveth with another, ſtretcheth out his hands, and takes hold of him. So did Jacob when he wreſtled with the Angel, he held him faſt, and would not let him go, till he had prevailed for a bleſſing.

3. Stretching out of the hand imports the liſting up of the minde to God in prayer. Prayer is the aſcent of the ſoul to God. We pray no more then we have communion with God in prayer. *Unto thee, O Lord* (ſaith David, Pſal. 25. 1.) *doe I liſt up my ſoul.* We ſhould not leave any thing of our ſouls, no nor of our ſelves here on earth, when we pray to *our Father which is in heaven.* We ſhould then lock our hearts againſt worldly thoughts, and ſet them open to God only. Satan is very buſie to buſie the heart with temptations, while the tongue is uttering petitions. Let hands liſted up be witneſſes that the ſoul is, that it is in the mount, out of the noiſe and cluſter of this world. How can we believe that God heareth us, when we doe not hear our ſelves? or that he ſhould be mindful to grant what we aſk, when we doe not minde what we are aſking?

4. Stretching out of the hands ſaith, that all our hope and expectation is in God. We ſtretch out our hands to him to tell him that we depend wholly upon him for help, mercy, favour and pardon, that unleſſe he deliver us, we are loſt and undone for ever. When a child is in danger of falling, he ſtretcheth out his

Oratio eſt elevatio mentis ad deum.

Qua autem ſegnitia eſt alienari & capi ineptis cogitationibus cum deum deprecaris, quaſi ſis aliud quod magis debes cogitare quam quod cum deo loquaris? quomodo te a deo audiri poſſis utas cum te ipſe non audias? vis eſſe deum memorem tui cum rogas? cum tu ipſe memor tui non ſis.

Cyprian. Ser. de Orat. Dominica.

his hands to his mother, or to any next him, crying for their help. If a man be fallen into the mire, or water, he stretcheth out his hands presently, though himself cannot speak, yet his hands lifted up speak for hands to lift him up. The prisoner in war casts down his weapons, and lifts up his hands to the victor for pitty and quarter. Thus hands lifted up or stretched out in prayer, begge mercy, and shew our dependance upon God for succour. The lifting up of our eyes to God, is of the same signification: *Unto thee lift I up mine eyes, O thou that dwellest in the heavens, as the eyes of servants look unto the hand of their masters, and as the eyes of a maiden to the hand of her mistresse, so our eyes waite upon the Lord our God till he have mercy upon us, Psal. 123. 1, 2.* In this posture Christ prayed to his father, *Job. 17. 1. These words spake Jesus, and lift up his eyes to heaven and said, Father the hour is come, glorifie thy Son.* He lifted up his eyes as a sign of confidence in, and holy boldnesse with his father. This signe is also given, with a hand stretched out in prayer, as *Zophar* gives in counsel;

If thou stretch forth thine hands towards him.

First, Observe,

That as the heart must be prepared for all good duties, so especially for prayer. If thou prepare thine heart, and stretch out thine hands towards him.

Prayer is a duty of greatest weight, a most spiritual duty, it is our access to God in Christ, it is our entering into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, *Heb. 10. 19.* and if ever we had need to look to the holinesse of our hearts, it is when we draw neer unto the holy God, who is looking into our hearts. In prayer we desire God to look into our hearts, and shall not we look into them our selves?

Secondly, Observe,

Prayer is a special duty of repentance. And the confession of our unpreparednesse, as a special part of prayer.

Zophar thought *Job* had need enough to repent, and he that repents hath need enough to pray: repentance is our returning to God; prayer is our drawing neer to God. *I will arise (saith the prodigal sonne) and go to my father, and I will say unto him, father, I have sinned against heaven and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy sonne.*

Thirdly, *If thou prepare thine heart, and stretch out thine hands towards him,*

Hence Observe,

In prayer the whole man must be exercised. Heart and hand must joyn in this duty. Not only the soul but the body must pray; hands must pray, knees must pray, and eyes must pray; *Gestures are speaking in prayer.* By these we pray when we hold our peace, and lift up a loud voice when we say never a word; *knocking or prostrating the body speaks humility, beating the breast, smiting upon the thigh, are significative of sorrow, lifting up the eyes and hands to heaven, argue a fervent and attentive spirit.* But as it is compleatest duty to pray with hand and heart; so it is emptiest hypocrisy, to pray with the hand and not with the heart. These gestures (take that caution) may soon degenerate; The body may be very active when the soul sits still or is escaped from the work. Some use much action, who use no affection in prayer; Soul-prayer though alone is good, but woe to body-prayer when it is alone; how can it get warmth or heat when it is alone? Soul-prayer is absolutely necessary, body-prayer is comely. Internal prayer pleaseth God most, external prayer honours God most. What God hath joyned together, let not us (while we may keep them together) part asunder.

And as the whole man should be employed in prayer, so especially in that *signal conclusion* of it, *Amen.* Some of the ancient Hebrews teach us to gather up all our spirits into the *Amen* of prayer, because prayer is (as it were) *gathered all together*, or summ'd up into *Amen.* The spirits of the whole prayer are contracted into it, and so should the spirit of him that prayeth. *Amen* is a short word, but it is in sense as long as the longest prayer. Most say *Amen*, because they use to say so, not because they know what they say. *Amen* is often at the tongues end, but 'tis seldom at the hearts end. Formality and flatnesse of the spirit, paul's and unspirits it in the speaking. There are 3. things which the Rab- bins have observed upon the saying of *Amen.*

First, Your *Amen* (say they) must not be hasty. Secondly, It must not be maimed or defective. Thirdly, It must not be alone.

*Ne sit responsio
r̄ Amenis ra-
p̄manca or-
ba, in Notis ad
Pirke Avorh.*

First, It must not be *hasty*, without a settled consideration of what we have prayed for. We must say *Amen* with our understandings. That's the Apostles argument for prayer in a known language: *else when thou shalt blesse with the Spirit, how shall he that occupieth the room of the unlearned say Amen at thy giving of thanks, seeing he understandeth not what thou sayest?* 1 Cor. 14. 16.

Secondly,

Secondly, *Amen* muſt not be *maimed*, that is, without the proſecution and inſtance of our ſpirits, we muſt ſtretch out our hearts after it, and be ſwallowed up in God.

Thirdly, *Amen* muſt not be *alone or an orphan*, that is, without faith, love, and holy confidence: for when we ſay *Amen*, we ſay *Let it be done*, and ſhall we ſay to God, *Doe all*, and have no faith that any thing ſhall be done? Let not *Amen* ſtand alone as a poor orphan, which hath neither father nor mother, *faith nor love* to ſupport and carry it on to the object of prayer, to the God hearing prayer.

Some interpreters give it, as *Zophar*'s ſpecial aim; to remember *Job* that his prayers had been faithleſſe and flat; that the ſpirits of his petition were exhal'd and gone. For whereas *Eliphaz* and *Bildad* had exhorted him to humility and patience, *Job* answers, he had prayed for both, as alſo that God would either end his pains or him, remove his ſorrows, or ſhew him the reaſon why they were continued. *Zophar* ſteps in upon this advantage: *Thou haſt been praying indeed (ſaith he) but thy heart hath not been right, nor thy ſpirit ſervent, thou haſt not prayed with a prepared heart, nor with a ſtretcht out hand unto God; thou haſt prayed rather out of the bitterneſſe, than out of the holineſſe of thy ſpirit; Thy ſues are the fruit of preſumption, not of faith; of unwarrantable boldneſſe with God, not of an holy confidence in him; now I would have thee pray indeed. Prepare thine heart and ſtretch out thine hands, pray with all thy might, and then hearken what the Lord God will ſay.*

This check (as ſome conceive) cauſed *Job* in his answer to *Zophar*, to complain, *I am as one mocked of his neighbour, who calleth upon God, and he answereth him: (chap. 12.)* as if he had ſaid, *Zophar* you have mocked and upbraided me with my prayers, you thought I did not prepare mine heart nor ſtretch out my hands to God in prayer: you ſpeak to me as if you had felt me in a cold ſweat at duty, or had ſeen the image of pale death ſitting upon all my addreſſes unto God. But I am ſure I feel you too hot at reprooſs, and ſee the image of an unfriendly jealouſie, ſitting upon this your addreſſe to me. You doe but mock me while you ſay unto me, prepare thine heart and ſtretch out thine hand to God. Yet (in my thoughts) this counſel of *Zophar* is ſo holy and grave, that I ſee not how a gracious heart (ſuch *Job* was) could interpret it as a mock; eſpecially conſidered in its connexion with the next verſe.

Verse 14. *If iniquity be in thine hand, put it far away, and let not wickednesse dwell in thy Tabernacle.*

He had exhorted him before, to prepare his heart and stretch out his hand; now he bids him prepare his hand before he stretch it out.

If iniquity be in thine hand,

The word Iniquity bears any sin; yet the *Chaldees* specificates it into a lye; if a lye be in thine hand. Others (which amounts to a lye) if deceit, wrong dealing, oppression or any violence be in thine hand, put it far away from thee: any thing that deceives is a lye.

Si mendacium sit in manu tua. Targ.

Intelligit rapinam aliorum bonorum facultates male parias. Si qua defraudatio in manu tua. Bez.

Isa. 44. 20. He feedeth of ashes. (that is, sorrow is his food) a deceived heart hath turned him aside, that he cannot deliver his soul nor say, Is there not a lye in my right hand? As if he had said, His Idol promised him better fare then ashes, yet he is so much deceived, that he cannot see he is, or say there is a lye in his right hand. Oppression is properly and usually called the sin of the hand. There are many sins of the body, which yet are not sins of the hand, all those are, wherein the hand acts most, as in violence and wrong; in these sins there is so heavy a hand, that they deserve to be called *sins of the hand*. And though the word may take in any kinde of sin, yet *Zophar* charges *Job* chiefly with that, as his other friends had done, more then once, before. That proclamation to repent, which the King of *Nineveh* caused to be published through the City ran in this tenor, *Let every one turn from the violence that is in their hands*; and if you would know what that was, read the second of *Nabum* there we are shewed, that *Nineveh* was a spoiling city, and the men thereof as lions, tearing in pieces enough for their whelps, and strangling for their lionnesses, they filled their holes with prey, and their dens with ravine, they cared not whom they ruined, so they might raise up their own estates. This is iniquity of the hand.

And secondly, We may understand it not only of outward and violent, but of any close and secret wrong; carry it as covertly as you can, even like *Juglers*, who do that before your face which you cannot see, yet wrong dealing and wrong doing is iniquity, and the iniquity of the hand. *Evil done by sleight of hand, or cunningly, is as bad, as that which is done by strength of hand or violently.*

Thirdly,

Thirdly, *If there be iniquity in thine hand*, is as if he had said, *if thou hast gotten any thing wrongfully, which still remains in thy power, put it away, &c.* To be in the hand, is to be in our dispose; and we say commonly, *such a thing is out of my hand*, when we have parted with it, or disposed of it. So, *if iniquity be in thine hand*, is, if thou hast deceived any man, and the matter be still with thee, restore it, send it home to the right owner, away with it, put it far from thee.

Before I come to the other branch, take one observation from this, as it hath reference to the former counsel; *Prepare thine heart, and stretch out thine hands towards God, if iniquity be in thine hand, put it far away from thee.* The hand must be cleansed as well as the heart. For as God cannot bear it, that we should come with clean hands, a fair outward conversation; when our hearts are filthy; (such Christ discovered the Pharisees, who were like platters washed on the out side, but unclean within; or like sepulchers fairly painted, but full of dead mens bones and rottenness,) so neither can he bear it, that they whose hands (even to the eye of the world) are filthy and unclean, should yet pretend, *they have as good hearts as others, they mean well*; as the one is *grosse hypocrisie*, so the other is *grosse profaneness*. Never brag of your good meanings, or that you have good hearts; when your hands are foul. I grant many have clean hands, while they have polluted hearts, but where I see polluted hands, I have great reason to think there is a polluted heart too, many appear better, but scarce any worse than they are. The heart may keep in its filthiness while the hands are washed, but if the heart be washed, the hand will not keep its filthiness. It is very possible for a man that hath a clean heart to foul his fingers, but he will not wear them foul. He reneweth faith and repentance, he washeth off the filth in that fountain which is always open for sin and for uncleanness. They whose constant way is evil, and yet say they have good hearts, deceive themselves, but cannot deceive others. Their impiety is too plain to deceive the plainest soul in grace, that hears them say so. The preparation of the heart will be seen at the fingers ends: purity of spirit cannot consist with impurity of life: if thou hast iniquity in thine hand, put it far away from thee.

Put it far away from thee.

רחיקה
Elonga eam.

The Original is one word, but it is a strong one; thrust it away, remove it to the utmost distance.

Hence

Hence learn: First,

That, sin must be put away. There is no inmate or neighbour so bad as sinne, if it dwell nigh you it will undoe you: it were better a Lyon and a Bear dwell with you, or that you dwell among scorpions, then that you and sin should dwell together. Sin is a bad commodity, you will never gain by it, you will certainly break if it lye upon your hand, put it off at any rate, or rather whatever it cost you, put it off. *If iniquity be in thine hand, put it away.* And not only so, But

Secondly, *Put it far away from thee.*

We can never put sin too far from us. The Apostles rule is, *Abstain from all appearance of evil*, that is, doe nothing wherein sin appears, or which hath a shadow of sin, *1 Thes. 5. 22.* *There is no holinesse in having a shew of goodnesse, but the very shews of sin are evil.* What the Apostle adviseth for the avoiding of sin, that it may not be committed, is as good advise for the putting away of sin when it is committed; For as we are to go farre from sin by a holy care lest we fall into it; so we must go farre from sin by holy repentance after we have fallen into it. We should put it so far from us, that there may be no returning. We should put it as far from us, as the East is from the West, which is the greatest distance, not only mensurable, but imaginable. When God pardons sin he puts it thus far from us, (*Psal. 103. 12.*) and so should we (if it were possible) when we repent of it. The Original word in the Psalme is that of the text, and may be rendred thus, *God hath put our sins as farre away from us, as he hath put the East from the West.* As the grace of God towards us will not suffer sin in the guilt of it to abide near us, so the grace of God in us, will not suffer sin in the pollution of it, to abide near us. Besides, sin is such both in the nature and effects of it, as no wise man can desire near him. Who would not poyson far from him? Who would not thrust the plague or the leprosie far away from him? Who desires the neighbourhood of a mortal enemy? Sin is all this and more to us, therefore put it far away.

Thirdly, *Zophar having invited Job to pray, counsels him to put iniquity far away.*

Note from it,

We cannot draw near to God in prayer, except we put sinne far from us.

If sin be not put far from us, God will remove far from us: The holy God will not come near (unlesse to punish) the prayers of an unholy heart. You may stretch out your hands to heaven, but you cannot reach heaven, if any iniquity be in your hands.

Fourthly, Taking iniquity (as it hath been opened) for the violation of commutative justice, for wrong dealing and oppression; Then observe,

That which is ill gotten must be restored.

Put it out of thy house, out of thy family, it will be a fire to burn, a moth to consume, a canker to fret all thy comforts; *that diu in manu, which is ill got, will poison that which is well got.* Moses bespeaks the Israelites concerning Corah, Dathan and Abiram. Depart I pray you from the tents of these wicked men, and touch nothing of theirs, lest you be consumed in all their sins: it is dangerous to be a neighbour to wicked men, the rayle of the storm sent upon them may fall upon our selves: it is more dangerous to keep wickedness in our own hands, the whole storm will then fall upon us: It is very sinfull to get by wrong, but it is more sinfull to keep what is wrongfully gotten; yet how hardly are men perswaded to part with it! It is easier to doe an act of charity then of justice; Many are willing to give: but few are willing to restore; yet we are more bound to be just then to be charitable, and to restore then to give; and indeed no man can give till he hath restored, nor be charitable till he is just. That which is stolen is not fit for a gift either to God or man. *God hates robbery both for almes and for burnt-offerings.* They who are unable may be innocent though they restore not, but no man can be innocent who is unwilling to restore. Some have done iniquity with their hands, who have not iniquity in their hands. What they have taken from others, is taken from them, or spent by them. These must shew, they have it in their hearts to restore all, though they have nothing in their hands to restore. How can we expect, that God should remit our just debts, if we will not restore our unjust gains?

Let not wickednesse dwell in thy tabernacles.

As the former clause respected the reforming of his person, so this the reforming of his family.

Let not wickednesse dwell.] That is, let it not continue there.

Q

But

Habitat iniquitas in domo, quando in ea diu manet, Pruf.

But is it well if wickedness dwell not with us? may it stay a while with us? No, not a moment. As the Apostle *Paul* speaks in reference unto those false brethren, who came in privily to spy out their liberty in Christ, and bring them into bondage, unto whom we gave place by subjection, no nor for an hour, Gal. 2.5. So we must not give place to wickedness for an hour; it is not enough to say of wickedness, it shall not dwell with us, it shall not abide with us for ever; we will have it but for a week or a night, it may be but for an hour: no, it must not stay with us an hour, no not one moment, with our good leave and liking. When *Zophar* saith, *Let not iniquity dwell in thy tabernacle*, he means, hasten it away; and the reason why he saith, *let it not dwell*, is, because no man can so watch his house and family, no nor his own heart, but sin will sometimes come in, he shall finde such strangers there as he never invited, such as he never looked for, he shall finde them not only knocking at the door; but boldly drawing the latch, unlocking the door and thrusting in; man cannot prevent this, either in regard of his heart or his house; but he may say, wickedness shall not dwell with me; as soon as he discovers it he may remove it, or hide it out of doors. Though we cannot keep evil out, yet we may thrust it out, though we cannot hinder its coming in, yet we may hinder its staying in; we need not make a bed, or provide a chamber for sin: this requires some pause and consideration. We examine men (if we know them not) whence they are and whether they will, before we bid them welcome, or admit them to rest under our roof. The Prophet rebukes the people of *Israel* (Jer. 4.12.) *How long shall thy vain thoughts lodge within thee?* Vain thoughts will offer themselves, but why do you accept and entertain them, why do you speak them fair? *Let not wickedness dwell in thy tabernacle.*

Tabernaculorum nomine puto loca sacra intelligi, quibus tanquam sacerdos præstat cum esset in prosperis, ubi ubi munera iniqua accepisse putavit Zophar, Bold.

In thy tabernacle.] Some understand it personally: The body of a man is his tabernacle, when the earthly house of this tabernacle (saith the Apostle) shall be dissolved, (2 Cor. 5. 1.) So let not wickedness dwell in thy tabernacle, is, let it not dwell with thee, or in thy heart.

But secondly, Tabernacles were of two sorts, ecclesiasticall, or civil, either the place of Gods worship, or of mans residence. Some expound this text in the former notion: *Let not wickedness dwell in thy tabernacle*, that is, take care to purge the worship of God from all idolatry and superstition: There was a publike worship

in that age, as we may collect from the diſcourſe of *Jobs* friends; Here *Zophar* (according to this ſence) preſſeth *Job* to a reformation of worſhip (he being a publike perſon and the Prielt) or accuſeth him, as having ſuffered abuſes to creep into it: at which *Eliphaz* ſeems to aim in his rejoynder Chap. 15. 34. *For the congregation of hypocrites ſhall be deſolate, and fire ſhall conſume the tabernacles of bribery.*

But I rather take tabernacle, for a civil dwelling, ſo, *Let not wickedneſſe dwell in thy tabernacle*, is (by a Trope) as if he had ſaid, let not wickedneſſe dwell in thoſe who dwell in thy tabernacle: A tabernacle is not a ſubject capable of good or evil, but as perſons abiding there are good or evil.

Hence obſerve: Firſt,

He that hath cleaned himſelf, ſhould labour to cleanſe others alſo.

At it ſhould not ſatiſſie us to be happy alone, ſo nor to be holy alone. Grace is communicative and catching as well as ſin: A man that hath no wickedneſſe dwelling in himſelf, would not have any man a dwelling for wickedneſſe: having purified his own heart and hands, he labours as far as his line reacheth, to puriſie thoſe about him. Chriſt gives this charge to *Peter*, *When thou art converted, ſtrengthen thy brethren.*

Secondly, In relation to our own tabernacles, Obſerve,

The governour of a family is to look to his family, to all under his charge, that wickedneſſe dwell not among them.

It was the commendation of *Abraham*, and that which moved God to entruſt him with his ſecrets, *I know Abraham that he will command his houſhold, and his children after him, and they ſhall keep the way of the Lord*: and if *Abraham* would teach his houſhold the way and will of God, doubtleſſe *Abraham* would not let that dwell in his houſhold, which was contrary to the way and will of God. When *Jacob* went to *Bethel*, with ſacrifice, he ſaid unto his houſhold and to all that were with him, *Put away the ſtrange Gods that are among you, and be clean.* Gen. 39. Such was the reſolution of *Joſhua*, *I and mine houſe will ſerve the Lord*: And *David* who had the care of a whole kingdom upon him, yet takes care that no wickedneſſe ſhould dwell in his Court and Royall family, *Pſal. 101. 7. He that worketh deceit ſhall not dwell in my houſe, he that telleth lies ſhall not carry in my ſight.* The ſins that dwell in our families, become ours, if we labour not to purge them out. A man

is guilty of so much sin as he might prevent by such means as God hath afforded him, if it doth it not. We have not satisfied our duties when we look to our selves only, but to all under our shadow or within our sphere. Further, Family sins bring family judgements, as well as nationall sins bring nationall, or personall sins personall judgements. Because *Eli* suffered his sons in sin, and did not restrain them, therefore he suffered for their sins; their sins were charged upon his account, and he paid dearly for them. When we make other mens sins our own, they will make us smart as much as our own: *And the sins of those who are ours, may quickly be ours. Where the relation is neerer, the contagion is quicker.* They are so, not only when we command and give them counsel to sin, or take pleasure in their sin, but when we do not reprove them for sin, or not improve all due means to prevent or remove their sin.

*Nota hic tria
ad veram res-
piscensiam ne-
cessaria, primo
cordis prepara-
tionem secundo
orationem ter-
tio iniquitatis
propulsionem.
Merc.*

Lastly, These two verses, present us with a platform of repentance in three speciall acts or requisites. First, *Preparation of the heart*: Secondly, *Fervent prayer*: Thirdly, *The putting away, casting out, or banishing of iniquity*: Till the heart be prepared we cannot pray, untill iniquity be purged out, prayer is not accepted, unlesse all three be done we have not repented, or our repentance must be repented of. Except we repent thus we cannot be saved, and only that repentance is not to be repented of, which is unto salvation.

JOB Chap. 11. vers. 15, 16.

For then shalt thou lift up thy face without spot; yea, thou shalt be stedfast, and shalt not fear. Because thou shalt forget thy misery, and remember it as waters that passe away,

IN the former context, Zophar gives Job good counsel; in this he gives him encouragements to follow that counsel. His encouragements are laid down more generally in these two verses; and they are drawn into particulars in the words following to the end of the chapter. There are three branches of this general promise in the 15. verse.

First, *Thou shalt lift up thy face without spot.*

Secondly, *Thou shalt be stedfast.*

Thirdly, *Thou shalt not fear.*

In the { First } he promiseth him { an Honourable }
 { Second } { a Serled } estate.
 { Third } { a Comfortable }

Verse 15. *Thou shalt lift up thy face without spot.*

We had an expression neer this at the 15. verse of the 10. Chapter, where Job seems to speak (as some expound) despairingly, *If I be righteous, yet will I not lift up my head*: or, as others, humbly, *I will not lift up my head though I were righteous*. Zophar answers him here: *Thou saist; if thou wert righteous thou wouldst not lift up thy head*, but, I tell thee, if thou wert righteous (according to the counsel given thee) thou mightest lift up both thy head and heart, thou mightest take both courage and comfort, *Then shalt thou lift up thy face without spot.*

What the lifting up of the head, or of the face imports, may be seen (chap. 10. 15.) I shall here only adde a threefold signification about lifting up the face, both phrases being of neer affinity.

1. To lift up the face is a signe of chearfullnesse, Job 22. 26. *For then shalt thou have thy delight in the Almighty, and shalt lift up thy face unto God*; that is, thou shalt lift up thy face unto God with delight. Joy is the light and life of the face, no marvel

then, if we lift up our faces when God causeth us to rejoice. *A merry heart, saith Solomon (Prov. 17.22.) doth good like a medicine,* and where that medicine works kindly, it sets a man upon his legs, and makes him hold up his head like a man. God hath given man an erect countenance in the fabrick of nature, but his countenance is then most erect, when grace causeth him to rejoice in God.

2, *To lift up the face*, is an act of reverence and respect. (*Deut. 28.50.*) *The Lord shall bring a nation against thee of a fierce countenance, which shall not regard the person of the old,* so we translate; the Hebrew is, *which shall not lift up his face to the old*, that is, which shall give no reverence to old men; the Septuagint render it thus, *there shall come against thee a people of fierce countenance, who shall not admire the face of an old man*; an old grave man, according to the common rules of civility, is to be had in admiration or high esteem. *Young ones should lift up their faces to honour those, whose faces hang down with age.*

Non elevet faciem ad senem,
Heb.
Non mirabitur faciem senis.
Sept.

Elevare caput
gestus est erecti
animi confidentis
& nihil erubescens.
Pined.

3. (Which I rather take for the meaning of this text) *lifting up of the face*, implieth strong confidence. Thus *Abner* speaks to *Asahel*, *Turn thee aside from following me, wherefore should I smite thee to the ground? How then should I hold up my face to Joab thy brother?* (*2 Sam. 2.22.*) that is, how shall I come with any confidence or freedom of spirit, before *Joab*, if I should slay thee? When *Cain* was rejected with his offering, (*Gen. 4. 5, 6, 7.*) the text saith, *He was very wroth, and his countenance, or his face fell:* which is directly opposit to lifting up the face. The falling of *Cains* face was in two things: First, He fell from a cheerful to a churlish countenance, he lookt doggedly and sowerly; we say of such a man, he hath a down look. Secondly, He fell from a confident, to a cowardly countenance. The fall of *Cains* countenance discovered the fear which fell upon *Cain's* heart; he did not bring the first offering with his heart, and he had no heart left to bring another offering. *The face varieth as the minde varieth. That is seen in the face which is out of sight:* The evidences of the heart are read there, and we may take the copy of a mans spirit in his countenance. Four things are chiefly seen in the face; 1. Pride: *The wicked through the pride of his countenance will not seek unto God,* (*Psal. 10. 4.*) 2. Fear; *Dan. 5. 6.* *Then the Kings countenance was changed, and his thoughts troubled him.* That is, his thoughts being troubled at that dreadful apparition, his countenance changed

Index animi
vultus.

changed. 3. Envy and discontent, (*Gen. 31. 2, 5.*) *Laban's countenance was not toward Jacob as before*; his face ſuffered an evil change, becauſe God made a good change in the eſtate of *Jacob*; though *Laban* was a ſubtle man and a diſſembler, yet his envy at the proſperity of *Jacob*, was too bigge to be diſſembled.

4. Guilt, and ſhame the fruit of it appear in the face; *He dures not ſhew his face, whoſe wickedneſſe ſtares in his face.* The Lord ſaid unto *Cain* (*Gen. 4. 7.*) *If thou do well, ſhalt thou not be accepted?* *panem oculos deſicit.* The word which we tranſlate *accepted*, ſignifies properly *to liſt* up, and ſo it may be rendred in that place; *if thou do well, thou ſhalt have a liſting up*, that is, *thou ſhalt liſt up thy face upon* as good termes as thy brother *Abel*: uprightneſſe hath boldneſſe both *Ovid. 6. Met.* with God and man. (*1 Joh. 3. 21.*) *If our heart condemne us not, then have we confidence (or freedom of ſpeech) towards God.* *Si bene egeris elevare, i.e. elevatio erit tibi,*

They that are aſhamed of what they have done, hang down their heads, or pull their hats over their eyes, they dare not be ſeen of men, much leſſe of God, who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity. *Thou ſhalt liſt up thy face.*

Without ſpot.

The Original imports any kinde of blemiſh. Some tell us, that the word *Momus*, is derived from it, which ſignifies a *fault-finder*, or one who makes it his buſineſſe and ſtudy, to finde or make faults in what is done or ſpoken. *To liſt up the face without ſpot*, is, to be without blemiſh, or blameleſſe. *Denotat vitium corporis vel quicquid pulchritudinem deſtruit.*

Spots in propriety of ſpeech belong to the body. *Can the Leopard change his ſpots?* *Jer. 13. 23.* The Lamb for the Paſſeover muſt be without ſpot, *Exod. 12. 5.* So muſt the Priests, *Lev. 21. 17.* As whatſoever ſtains the beauty, and darkens the light of the face, ſo whatſoever diſcompoſeth the harmony, or hinders the comelineſſe of the whole body, comes under the proper ſenſe of this word.

There is alſo a metaphorical ſpot, which is two fold: Firſt, Upon the name or credit: ſo a mans diſhonour is his ſpot; any blemiſh caſt upon our reputation, is called an *aſperſion*. Secondly, Upon the minde or inward man; ſo every ſin is a ſpot. The Greek word for *unblameable*, or without ſinful blemiſh, diſcovers it ſelf plainly to be the offspring of this in the Hebrew. The ſoul takes ſpots as well as the body. Whatſoever blemiſheth the beauty, or obſcures the glory of the minde; whatſoever ſullieth the

the credit, or obscures the dignity of man, comes under the metaphorical ſence of this word.

Moses having exalted God in his perfections, *A God of truth and without iniquity, juſt and right is he*, (Deut. 32. 4.) ſubjoins (the more to aggravate them) not the imperfections, but the groſſe impieties of *Iſrael*, (ver. 5.) *They have corrupted themſelves, their ſpot is not the ſpot of his children*; that is, their ſin is not a ſin of infirmity, ſuch as often appears upon the children of God. They ſin as if they had no relation to God; they ſin like aliens, yea like rebels, not like children, not like members of the common-wealth of *Iſrael*. Any ſpot is bad, but ſome are worſe. Sin-spots are the worſt of ſpots, yet they are not all equally bad: There is a ſpot which is, and a ſpot which is not the ſpot of Gods children. The Apoſtle counſels the *Philippians* to take heed of theſe ſpots, as they deſired to live in the reputation of children, (chap. 2. 15.) *That ye may be blameleſſe and harmleſſe, the ſons of God without rebuke* (ſo we render,) or (as the Greek bears it clearly) *that ye may be the ſpotleſſe ſons of God*, that is, without all ſuch ſpots as are unfutable to, or inconſiſtent with your ſonſhip. Some are ſo beſpotted, that they are called ſpots: *Theſe*, ſaith the Apoſtle *Jude* (ver. 12.) *are ſpots in your feaſts of charity*. He that hath many ſpots, is not forward to hold up his face, then how ſhall he who is a ſpot?

But what is the ſpot intended in this text? There are three interpretations about it.

Fiſt, Some take it for the ſpot of grief and ſorrow ariſing from affliction. *Thou ſhalt lift up thy face without ſpot*, that is, thou ſhalt get clear of theſe afflictions which ſpot thy face with ſorrow. This ſence alludes to that Chap. 9. v. 31. where *Job* complaineth, *though I waſh my ſelf, &c. yet ſhalt thou plunge me in the diſh*, I ſhall be all mire and dirt, all to be spotted with troubles and ſorrows, though I waſh in the waters of repentance: No ſaith *Zophar*, if thou doeſt repent indeed, *thou ſhalt lift up thy face without ſpot*, God will throw thee into the dirt no more. Some tranſlate from the letter of the Hebrew, *thou ſhalt lift up thy face out of the ſpot*, that is, thou ſhalt riſe out of thy affliction, and recover out of thy mire of thy tribulations.

Hence Obſerve,

They who repent and get looſe from ſin, ſhall proſper, and get looſe from ſorrow.

Though

Though all our repentings, washings and purgings, cannot deserve freedom from the least evil, yet this is the way to such freedom; and when we (through the power of Christ) purge our selves from all filthinesse of flesh and spirit, we are in the fairest probability, in the nearest possibility to be freed from the spots of tribulation and affliction. *Sin and sorrow usually come, and goe together*: When we fall into the mire of sin, God casts us into the mire of sorrow; and though he often vary his dispensations, yet this is a truth, That when we get out of the mire of sin, the Lord lifts us up out of the mire of sorrow.

Secondly, Others take it for a *sin-spot*. If thou prepare thine heart, &c, then thou shalt lift up thy face without spot, that is, the Lord will not take notice of thy sin.

Hence note,

Though no man is without his spot, yet all beleivers are accounted spotlesse.

Balaam confesseth Numb. 23. 21. He hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob, neither hath he seen perversnasse in Israel, that is, he charged no spot upon them at that time; they sinned not perversely, nor did they lie impenitently in sin; Christ sanctifieth and cleanseth his Church with the washing of water by the word, that he may present it to himself a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish, Ephes. 5. 26, 27.

Thirdly, Many understand it of a *shame-spot*, which is the consequent of sin. Thou shalt lift up thy face without spot, that is, thou shalt not be ashamed to lift up thy face, or when thou liftest up thy face, thou shalt have clear and free access to God. No cloud shall sit upon thy spirit to interrupt communion with him.

Hence Observe,

Holiness of life and purity of conscience, cause boldnesse and confidence in our approaches to God.

The Apostle Peter chargeth husbands, to dwell with their Wives according to knowledge, and as being heirs of the same grace of life, that their prayers be not hindered; 1 Pet. 3. 7. Uneven yokes shall walking in any relation, hinders prayer three waies first, it deads our spirits, streightens our hearts, weakens our gifts for prayer. Secondly, It hinders the effect, fruit and successe of prayer. Thirdly, It hinders us from the very act, it breeds a strange-

De ruboris ob pudorem non autem de peccati macula zophorem intelligere exigit faciei elevatio.

Bold. Elevare faciem sine macula nihil aliud quam nil in se habere quod conspiciat sibi nulla pallescere culpa. Id.

ness between our souls and God, and makes us listless to the duty. The soul is unwilling to come into the presence of God, while sin sticks upon the conscience - such as have no heart to come before God, cannot lift up their faces to him. It is said of the poor Publican *Luk. 18.* that he durst not *lift up his eyes to heaven*, he had low thoughts of himself, and his posture was lowly. The Publican had, no purpose to continue in sin, yet because his conscience was not cleared of sin, he durst not lift up his face to heaven, but standing afar off says, *God be merciful to me a sinner.* Guilt clogs the soul. How shall an unholy heart converse with a holy God? When we lift up our faces, or give good looks to sinne, we cannot lift up our faces to, or expect a good look from God. They whose hypocrisie is so vigorous, that they can at once look upon sin with joy, and upon God with confidence, shall at last to their sorrow finde God rejecting their confidences; and indeed he is not confident but impudent, who hopes for favour from God, while himself make sin his favourite. Those hypocrites went thus high, whom the Lord upbraids *Jer. 7. 9.* *Will ye steal, murder, and commit adultery, and swear falsely, and come and stand before me in this place? Some hypocrites seem to have a very lively hope, yet the hope of all hypocrites shall be as the giving up of the Ghost.*

Lastly, The spot from which Job is promised freedom, is expounded for *disgrace or dishonour.* Job was beipattered by his friends as a wicked man, as the worst of wicked men, an hypocrite.

Hence Observe,

It is a great mercy to have our credit cleared up from those blemishes which the uncharitable suspicions or rash censures of men have cast upon us.

There is no spot except that upon the conscience which is so unbeautiful as that upon our credit. He hath little to lose in this world who hath lost his good name: And if the losse of credit be so great an affliction, the reparation of it cannot be a small mercy. *David* was a man spotted with the imputation of rebellion, *Saul* lookt upon him as a traitour: It was a high favour which God gave him, when he gave him back his good name: when he caused him to lift up his face without spot, yea without spot in the eye of *Saul*, *Saul* acquitted him, and said, *thou art more righteous than I.* The Lord brought forth his righteousness as the light,
and

and his just dealings at the noon-day, Psal. 37.6. His righteousness lay in the dark, and his just dealing was adjudged treachery and deceit: Yet at last he recovered his credit, and his name was clothed with honour in the estimation of his adversaries. This is the first promise, *Thou shalt lift up thy face without spot.* The second is.

Tea thou shalt be stedfast.

It is a happiness to get a good estate, but it is a greater happiness to keep it. *Thou shalt be stedfast.* The Hebrew word, in the verb, signifies to melt or dissolve; and in the adjective, *Strong* durable and compact; that which is melted is called compact, either by the figure antiphrasis, because it is uncompact, or, according to the nature of the thing, because metals which have been melted grow more compact and soild when they cool again. Some render it here, *Thou shalt be like a molten pillar*; brass or iron being molten and cast into the figure of a pillar, are strong and stedd; the word is so rendered, (1 Sam.2.8.) *The pillars* (that is the firmest and strongest parts) *of the earth, are the Lords*, This promised stedfastness may be taken two wayes.

PR
Ludis, liquefactus durus compactus, vel per antiphrasin, vel quod metallum fusa consolidentur.
Hinc PYTHUSUM, in hoc libro possum sumitur pro PYTHI forti valido.
Merc.

First, In reference to his externals, as if Zophar had said. *Thou wast once Master of a good estate, thou wast once rich and full, but thy estate, thy riches were not stedfast, thou hast lost all, thy wealth is consumed and gone; yet humble thy self, and thou shalt lift up thy face, thou shalt not only be exalted but established. Thou shalt be stedfast.*

Secondly, Stedfastnes may referre to his internals, and so there may be a four fold stedfastnes.

1. Of judgement, When a man holds to his profession, and fleets not in opinion. The Apostle cautions his Ephesians (chap. 4.14.) *Be no more children tossed too and fro, with every wind of doctrine*: be firm to your principles, be not as a meteor carried about with every gust, but as a star fixed in your orb.

2. There is a stedfastness of resolution, 1 Cor.15.58. *Be ye stedfast and unmoveable*, that is, hold to your purpose: serve the Lord, and go on in his work, let nothing take you off: Such was the masculine stedfastness of *Queen Hester*, resolving to doe her duty in the face of danger, *If I perish, I perish.*

3. There is a stedfastnes of faith, When we beleeve and do not waver, or hesitate, Jam 1.6. The Apostle Paul speaks of the so-

ἐπι' αὐτοῦ
πίστεως.

lidity of the firmament of faith, Col. 2. 5. *Rejoycing in your order and the stedfastnes of your faith in Christ.* And Peter exhorts to resist the devil, being stedfast in the faith, 1 Pet. 5. 9. *He that fights must look to his footing. We cannot resist another till we are settled our selves.*

4. There is a stedfastnes of conscience; Conscience is full of uncertainties till we settle upon Christ: the stedfastnes of conscience ariseth from the peace of conscience; and our peace flows to us in the blood of the covenant.

We may understand this promise of outward, but especially of inward stedfastnesse; of the stedfastnesse of his faith and the quietnesse of his conscience; that he should no longer hang between hope and fear, between perswasions and doubtings of the love of God.

Hence Observe,

Grace establisheth the heart.

Gratia reddīt
hominem con-
stantem fir-
mum securū &
constantē a-
gentem, mini-
mē presumen-
tem. Pined.

Put away sin, and thou shalt be stedfast. Grace is brought in to the heart by Christ: Grace and Christ can never part, the doctrine of grace is therefore said to establish the heart, because Christ is in it, Heb. 13. 9. *It is a good thing that the heart be established with grace, not with meats, which have not profited them that have been occupied therein: when he saith it is good, he means, it is better that the heart be established by grace, then by meat. For meat doth in a sence establish the heart, that is, it recreates and refreshes the heart. As Abraham speaks to the three men whom he invited to his tent Gen. 18. 5. I will fetch a morsell of bread, and comfort ye your hearts, the Hebrew is, stay or establish your hearts.* But the lasting comfort and establishment of the heart, is by grace; that is, with grace wrought in the heart, or with the doctrine of grace (which is a means of working that grace) for he opposeth grace to meats, about which questions were then started, and many were unsettled; and with meats he understands by a *Synecdoche* the whole body of the ceremoniall law, which is opposed to the Gospel, or the doctrine of grace: as if he had said, do not think to settle your selves by the ceremoniall law, one part whereof consisted in the choice and distinction of meats, for they have not profited them that have been occupied therein, they have gotten no establishment by them, but grace will doe it: As your fathers did eat Manna in the wilderness, so meats of the sacrifice in Canaan, and are dead, but he that feeds upon

upon Christ, and is filled with grace, shall live for ever. Meats profited them so little, that they are said not to profit them; they administred only a transient help to the body; but grace profits so much, that it only may be said to profit: that administers a permanent advantage to the soul. Grace renders us alwayes the same, and preserves us from change. Inconstancy is the companion of sin: yea inconstancy is the companion of all earthly things; earthly things move and are unsteady; *it is impossible to stand fast upon an unsteady foundation.* The Apostle (*Eph. 4. 13.*) describeth the Gentiles thus. *I say unto you* (speaking to the Saints) *that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, ye were Gentiles, but now I would not have you walk as other Gentiles,* namely as unconverted Gentiles, Doe not imitate them from whom you have made so happy a departure; but how did they walk? *In the vanity of their minde*, that is, in the unsetlednesse and unconstancy and unstaidnesse of their minde; you have received grace, and grace should make you firm and stable upon your basis, upon Christ your bottom. The holy Ghost reproves this unsetlednes in the old Jews (*Jer. 2. 23.*) *Thou art a swift Dromedary traversing her wayes,* (never settled in any away, *vers. 36.*) *why gaddest thou about so much to change thy way? thou also shalt be ashamed of Egypt, as thou wast ashamed of Assyria;* thou wentest to this kingdome and to the other nation for help, and here thou thoughtest to strengthen thy self, and there to obtain deliverance; *Why gaddest thou about so much?* the world being uncertain leaves thee in perpetuall uncertainties, thou couldst find no help in *Assyria*, thou shalt find none in *Egypt*, neither the one nor the other shall be able to establish thee. *So chap. 31. v. 22. How long wilt thou go about, O thou back-sliding daughter?* We are in continuall motion till we settle in God. As the needle in the Mariners compasse being toucht with the loadstone is unquiet till it points to the North, and there it settles: so it is with the soul, to what quarter of the creature soever we turn our selves, we shall be unsetled, wavering and unsteady till we point directly unto God, till we look heavenward. *The heart finds no ground, till it gets off the earth.*

There is o double unstedfastnesse which sin brings in, and grace casts out.

First, About our way, many are alwayes to choose; whether this way or that, is their quere: they not only (which is the in-

firmity of many of the Saints) halt in their way, but between two ways. An upright heart may be unsteady in the right way; but a carnal heart is unsteady between the right way and the wrong. Such are sometimes in good wayes, and sometimes in evil wayes, they may happen upon a good way, but they cannot chuse it, or if they chuse it, it is not for its goodnesse but commodiousnesse; it serves their turns, and upon that account they take a turn in it.

Secondly, They are unsteadfast about the end; A wicked man is often secure, but he is never settled concerning his end. He presumes he shall be well, but he cannot know it shall be well with him. They who walk in dark wayes, must needs be in the dark about their end. An evil minde is never quiet upon good termes. They who are morally evil, have no true reason to expect eternal good. There is a quietness of minde concerning our end, which ariseth from the ignorance of our ill estate, and there is a quietnesse which ariseth from the knowledge of our good estate: in the former sense many wicked men are quiet, their consciences do not trouble them, and they wonder why any mans should. These are asleep in the darknesse of sin, and they shall lye down in the darknesse of sorrow. Only he that findes himself united unto Christ, and by vertue of that union, cleansed from the guilt, and relieved against the dominion of sin, is steadfast indeed. *Him wilt thou establish (saith the Prophet) in perfect peace, whose minde is stayed on thee.* It is a ballard peace which is the daughter of ignorance, true peace is the daughter of saving knowledge.

Lastly, As this stedfastness is understood of his outward estate. We learn,

That God only can establish the creature to us.

The fashion of the world passeth away, yet God can bid it stand. The creature can be no more to us then God makes it, how much so ever we make it in our account. *David* calls his outward estate a *mountain*, *Psal. 30. 6, 7.* yet he acknowledgeth that all the strength and standing of his mountain was from God. *Lord by thy favour thou hast made my mountain to stand strong.* And he found his mountain shaking, yea and his heart shaking too, when God did but hide his face. *Thou didst hide thy face, and I was troubled.* That's the second thing promised. There is yet a third,

viz.

And

And thou shalt not fear.

He carries it higher yet. There is an holy fear, and there is a sinfull fear. There is a fear of care, and there is a fear of distraction. There is a fear of watchfulnesse, and there is a fear of distrustfulnesse. He doth not mean the holy fear of care and watchfulnesse; but the sinfull fear of distraction and distrustfulnesse, *Psal. 112. 1. Blessed is the man that feareth God, Why? vers. 7. 8. He shall not be afraid, he that feareth holily, shall not be afraid distractingly.* Again, This exemption from fear doth not leave us secure; It is *Babylon* which saith, *I sit as a Queen and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow.* She is so fearless that she is also careless. The more *Jerusalem* and her children know their safety, the more they labour to be safe.

Thou shalt not fear. This negative promise may have a threefold reference. *Thou shalt not fear*: First, The continuance of thy present troubles. Nor secondly, The return of these troubles. Nor thirdly, The rising of new troubles. Thy heart shall be farre above all these fears.

Hence Observe,

First, *To get free from sin, is the way to get free from fear.*

Put away iniquity, and then thou shalt not fear. As by fear we *Mala conscientia nunquam*
keep from iniquity (*The fear of the Lord is to depart from evil,*) *est sine metu.*
so by departing from iniquity we keep from fear: An evil conscience is a troubled conscience: *God is above all fear; and man* *Extra Deum nihil est firmum, unde efficitur ut nemo*
is never without fear till he is in God. (*PROV. 21. 1.*) *The righteous*

Secondly, *To be free from the fear of evil is better than to be freed from evil.* *extra Deum positi esse sine metu.* *Sand.*

He doth not say barely, thou shalt be freed from evil, but, Thou shalt be freed from fear. Happiness consists more in removing inward than outward trouble. He that is not indeed afraid of evil before it comes, may be happy though it comes. It is the perfection of our spiritual estate not to fear: *Perfect love casteth out fear:* (*1 Joh. 4. 18.*) It casteth out all fear that we shall loose the favour of God, or be cast out of his love: it doth not cast out the fear of offending God, but that whereby we question the favour of God. Whatsoever the premises of Gods dealings are, such souls makes this conclusion, That God will doe them no hurt, and means them nothing but good. A great part of the Saints portion

on

on earth and in heaven, lies in their deliverance from fear. And if any ask, how can this be? The next verſe answers,

Verſe 16. *Because thou ſhalt forget thy miſery, and remember it as waters that paſſe away.*

עַמְלֵךְ תִּשְׁכַּח
Laborum obli-
viſceris.

These words give us a reaſon of the former. *Thou ſhalt not fear, becauſe thou ſhalt forget thy miſery, Or thy labour.* As we do not feel, ſo we cannot fear that which we have forgotten: and he who is delivered from dangers, is much armed againſt the fear of danger; while he well conſiders how he overcame thoſe which are paſt, he ſees whatſoever may come, as already conquered.

Thou ſhalt forget.

This forgetfullneſſe implies two things.

Fiſt, That he ſhould be long free from ſuch evils as had oppreſſed him, ſo long, that he ſhould forget that he was ever oppreſſed by ſuch evils: The fruit of a long freedom from trouble, is forgetfullneſſe of that trouble. The Lord ſaith of his people in *Babylon, they have been loſt ſheep; their ſhepherds have cauſed them to go aſtray, they have gone from mountain to hill, they have forgotten their reſting place* (Jer. 50. 6.) now as ſheep having gone long aſtray, forget their former folds and reſting places, ſo they who have been long freed from miſery, forget their miſery. *Length of time wears out the remembrance both of the good we have enjoyed, and of the evils we have ſuffered.* Thus God encourageth the beleeving Gentiles, *Iſa. 54. 4. Fear not, for thou ſhalt not be aſhamed, neither be thou confounded, for thou ſhalt not be put to ſhame: for thou ſhalt forget the ſhame of thy youth, and ſhalt not remember the reproach of thy widowhood.* The ſhame of their youth, was their bondage in *Egypt*: the reproach of their widowhood, was their captivity in *Babylon*; here the Lord promiſeth ſuch a mercy, as ſhall ſwallow up the memory of both. As a great mercy puts out the memory of a leſſer (*Jer. 16. 14, 15.* The deliverance out of the Babylonish captivity, ſwallowed up that deliverance from Egyptian bondage,) ſo great mercies long continued, ſwallow up the remembrance of all our miſeries.

Secondly, This forgetting notes ſuch a removal of former evils, that not ſo much as a ſcarr, or any print of them ſhould remain to be ſeen: while the ſcarr of a wound remains, the memory of it cannot but remain. When *Joſeph* interpreted *Pharaohs* dream

about the seven years of plenty, and the seven years of famine, (*Gen. 41. 13.*) he saith there should be such a famine upon the land after the seven years of plenty, that the *seven years of plenty should be forgotten*: why forgotten? because there should be no print, no signe left of plenty: so the Lord sometimes after seven years of famine, after seven years of poverty or trouble, gives seven years of such plenty, peace, rest and comfort to his people, as wear out all the marks of their former afflictions. When Josephs brethren feared he would remember the wrongs which they had done him, he answers as if he would assure them that there was not the least print of them left in his minde, *Gen. 50. 21. Fear ye not, I will nourish you and your little ones.* He hath forgotten all received injuries, who resolves to return curtesies. He is farthest from revenge, who is ready to feed his enemy. Thus saith Zophar, *Thou shalt forget thy misery*, the Lord will heal thy wound so perfectly, that there shall not be so much as any mark of it remaining. The forgetfullnesse of misery, cannot but spring from an eminent succession of the contrary mercie. The Prophet describes such a change and this effect of it. *Isa. 65. 13. My servants (saith the Lord) shall eat, and ye shall be hungry, my servants shall drink, but ye shall be thirsty, my servants shall rejoice, but ye shall be ashamed,* hence *v. 16. He that blesseth himself in the earth, shall blesse himself in the God of truth, because the former troubles are forgotten:* Eating causeth us to forget hunger, so doth drinking thirst, and rejoycing, shame. Thus saith Christ, A woman after sore travell remembers her anguish no more, for joy that a man is born into the world, *Joh. 16. 21.* Either of these waies Zophar may be expounded *Thou shalt forget thy misery*, that is, thou shalt have freedom from thy misery, till the memory and marks of it are quite worn out; such a series of mercies shall succeed thy troubles, as shall make thee doubt whether thou wast at all in trouble: *Thus to forget misery, is to be perfectly happy*, and in the issue both these met in Job: The long continuance, and the abundance of mercy which he received, made him discount all the evil which he had endured.

Thou shalt forget.

But how could he forget? For the clearing of this and other Scriptures of the same stile, take this distinction. There is a double forgetfullnesse. First, in reference to the rationall part:

S

Secondly,

*Quantum at-
tinet ad scien-
tiam rationa-
lem memor
priorum
malorum,
quantum au-
tem ad expe-
rientis sensum
priorum imma-
mor.* Aug. de
Civit. Dei 1. 22.
c. 30.

*Hec olim me-
ministi juva-
bit.*

*Anima beata
frequens indefi-
cienter aternu-
rum jucundi-
tate gaudio-
rum, oblita erit
culparum, obli-
ta peccatorum;
nec tamen ideo
sua liberationis
oblita, ut libe-
ratori sua sit
ingrata.* Aug.
ubi su. 12.

Secondly, in reference to the sensitive part. He is not promised (for that were an affliction) forgetfulness of his afflictions in reference to his rationall part, he should remember them still so as to consider what they were, and to be thankfull for his deliverance out of them. In this sense, they who have the greatest cause to forget these miseries, have also greatest cause to remember them; it is the will of God we should. *As it is a sin affectedly to forget the sins we have committed and are pardoned, so to affect a forgetfulness of the sorrows we have suffered, and are escaped, is sinfull; God receives much glory by our recognizing of pardoned sins, and of escaped sorrows.*

But in reference to a sensibleness of those evils, or of any trouble arising from the remembrance of them; thus he is promised to forget them. As if Zophar had said, *When thou thinkest of thy affliction it shall not afflict thee, yea it shall be thy joy to remember it. It is a great refreshing to remember the troubles which we have been in, and are freed from.* When Joseph was advanced in the Court of Pharaoh to great honour, and was married there, he called the name of his first-born son *Manasse*; from this word signifying to forget, and he gives the reason of it, *for God hath made me forget all my toil and all my fathers house*, (Gen. 41. 51.) How had God made him to forget it? Not in regard of the rationall act, for he did remember what his fathers house was, together with all the afflictions he met with there from his envious brethren, and this was his duty: but the Lord made him forget all the pain, smart and sorrow of those afflictions, *He was very sensible how much he had suffered, but he had no sense of it.* In heaven we shall forget all the troubles and storms of this life; and all our sins, as they are any hinderance to our joy, but there shall be a remembrance even in heaven, of the troubles and sins of this life, so far, as to give God the glory of making that glorious change. As we may be said not to know evils two waies, either because we are ignorant of them, or because we have no experience of them; so we may be said not to remember past evils two waies, either because the memory of them doth not stay with us, or because the remembrance of them doth not annoy us. And that's the meaning of forgetfulness about injuries; when we exhort not only to forgive a wrong, but to forget it: A man may rationally remember the wrong which another had done him, with all the circumstances and passages of it, and yet forget it spiritually. Some say, *they*

they are content to forgive an injury, but they can never forget it; I say, forget it so far as to forgive it fully, and then remember it as much as you will. *The naturall memory of injuries is no sin, but the angry and revengefull memory.* God in the new Covenant is said to forget the sins of his people, and to remember them no more; but doth he forget any thing, nor doth it slip out of his memory? No, he knows all things by one everlasting act, and he remembers even all the sins of his elect, he remembers all the sins which he hath pardoned, but he is said not to remember them, or to forget them when he pardons them, because they are before him as if they were not remembered, that is; he is not provoked by those sins, his Spirit is not drawn out in revenges against such sinners as he hath pardoned. Thus in the text before us: *Job* being delivered from his outward afflictions and inward temptations, is assured he shall forget them; not that the rationall act should be deleted and blotted out; but the sensitive: the trouble of this troubles, the afflictivenesse of his afflictions should be removed, he should remember sorrow to his sorrow no more.

Seeing it is promised *Job* that he shall forget his misery;

Hence Observe, That,

The very representation of evils past, may be a present pressing evil.

The representation of past afflictions, is sometimes very afflictive. As a man by considering his former comforts, may take in comfort; or by reflecting upon, and remembring his former sins, may sin over all his sins: so by remembring his former sorrows he may have a new indurance and impression upon his spirit of all his sorrows. It is a mercy when evils are remembered without a taste of evil; and when a review of former sorrows doth not revive our sorrows.

Secondly Observe, *Thou shalt forget thy misery.*

Forgetfulness is the cure of all our sorrows.

The forgetfulness of some things is a sin, and the forgetfulness of other things is a priviledge. To forget our duties, to forget the minde of God made known unto us, is our sin; but (as explained) to forget the trouble and affliction which hath been upon us, is a speciall priviledge; It is sin to forget the history of our troubles, but it is mercy to forget the pain of them. Forgetfulness is good for little, only the forgetfulness of the evil of sin, or of evil customs, so as not to practise them again; and the

forgetfulness of the evils of punishment, or of our evil condition, so as not to be oppressed with them, is good, and the cure of all those evils. When the word preached hath wounded the heart of a wicked man, and made it smart, what is his cure? his cure is to cast the word out of his thoughts, and to forget it; or as much of it as he can; if he can but forget the word, his cure is wrought, and he is whole again; though indeed, such a mans remedy is worse then his disease, and his plaister then his pain, yet he hath got (such as it is) a cure. Thus also the forgetfulness of our troubles is the remedy of our troubles, as sleep is of our forest travels. (Psal. 127. 2.) *So he giveth his beloved sleep*; So, how is that? that is, notwithstanding all the hard labour and pains they take, yet the Lord giveth them sleep, and sleep makes them forget all their former labour. So some interpret those words, (Psal. 126. 2.) *We were like them that dream*, that is, when the Lord began to work deliverance, to turn again the captivity of Zion, we (as it were) forgot what our state and condition but lately was; a dreamer forgets how it was with him; so, we are as them that dream; we have forgotten all the evils we have been in, even the long time of our captivity. When a friend is in great pain, such as the tooth-ach, &c. we say to him (in a meritment) *do but forget it a while and you shall be cured*. You may write (*probatum est*) upon this receipt, if you can receive it. But it is God only that can cause us to receive it, he only can work this forgetfulness of evil, as he only works a true remembrance of what is good. Some men have taught an art of memory, but tis God must teach this art of forgetfulness; this forgetfulness proceeds from the grace or favour of God. Heathens speak much of the river *Lethes*, of which if a man did drink, he presently lost his memory, and forgot all that he had either enjoyed or endured. *Lemuel* (Prov. 31. 4.) would not have *Kings drink wine*, (that is, immoderately) *lest they drink and forget the law* (verf. 5.) but he adviseth (verf. 6.) *to give strong drink to him that is ready to perish; and wine unto those that are of heavy hearts*. Let him drink and forget his poverty, and remember his misery no more (v. 7.) Of this wine some understand that of the Evangelist *Marke*, in his description of Christs passion (c. 15. v. 22.) *They gave him wine to drink mingled with mirrhe*, but he received it not. Naturalists observe, that mirrhe stupifies and dulls the sense of pain; but Christ bid pain do its worst, he needed not forget

Adulimadu so-
fo commacul-
illitum, dhyrha
prafumptione
munius.
Apul. l. 8.

forget it who was able to conquer it; his Spirit was infinitely above such reliefs. But to the point, as there is a natural and an artificial way to cause forgetfulness of misery, so there is a supernatural. God can give his people to drink of such a mystical *Lashes*, he can give them a cup of such a river of consolation, as shall drown the memory of all their sorrows: As when a table-book is written all over, you may take a sponge and wipe out every letter, so when our memories are full of our miseries, the Lord can sponge all out, and not leave so much as one line or letter to be read any more.

Thirdly, *Zophar* puts this forgetfulness of his misery, as a consequent of *Job's* putting away of his iniquity.

Hence, Observe,

When the hand and heart are clear of sin, former sufferings will not be grievous to us.

So long as a man continues in sin; not only his present, but his past sufferings are his torment: put away iniquity, and thou shalt puttest away the tormenting thoughts of thy misery; thou shalt not feed upon the wormwood and the gall, as the Church did, (*Lam. 3. v. 19.*) while she remembered her affliction: the blow was past, but the remembrance of it was as bitter as gall, and as unpleasant as a dinner of wormwood in heaven; or in that perfect state of blessedness which is promised (*Rom. 7. 17.*) *God will wipe away all tears from our eyes*; because then he will for ever cast every sin out of our hearts and lives. The captive *Jews* in *Babylon* kept their sins too close, and therefore when they sat down by the river, and remembered *Zion*, they wept (*Psal. 137.*) the sorrows and afflictions which they had in *Zion*; as well as their love to *Zion*, made them weep in *Babylon*; though while they were in *Babylon*, they lived free from sorrow, so free, that many of them could not be got out of *Babylon* when God called them away (*Zech. 2. 6.*) and when *Cyrus* had proclaimed them a full liberty to go away (*Ezra 1. 3.*) yet say they, *when we remembered Zion, our tears were wont to flow*. The remembrance of former troubles will afflict, till we are cleared from the guilt, and have subdued the power of sin. *Thou shalt forget thy misery.*

And remember it as waters that pass away.

Some read these and the words before, not as a promise, but as an exhortation: *Do thou forget thy misery, or remember it as*

waters that passe away. As if he had said, Thou poorest too much upon thy sorrows; I counsel thee to forget them; let them be as a river swallowed up in the sea of an eternall oblivion.

But I conceive this latter clause to be an explication of the former. For if thou ask how shall he forget his miseries? Heer's the answer; he shall forget them as *waters that passe away.* This similitude is more than once used in Scripture; to note utter forgetfulness. *Job* (Chap. 6. 15.) compares his friends to *the streams of brooks that passe away*; because they had forgotten the laws of friendship. *David* imprecates vengeance on his enemies in a like phrase; (*Psalm* 58. 7.) *Let them melt away as waters that run continually*; that is, let them and their memoriall perish.

Non recordaberis amplius,
nam aquarum
qua praterie-
runt nulla po-
tius recorda-
tio est.

Who takes notice or remembers the waters that passe in a river, or under a bridge? When the woman of *Tekoa* would shew that they were all as lost and buried in oblivion, if *David* did not fetch home his punishment; she expresseth it thus, *We must needs die, and are as water spilt upon the ground; which (passe away, and) cannot be gathered up again,* 2 Sam. 24. 14.

This may be interpreted; first as an allusion, either strictly to *Noah's flood*. *Thou shalt remember it as waters that passe away*, that is, thou shalt remember the flood of all thy sorrows and afflictions; as thou dost remember the flood of *Noah*; of which, no doubt, *Job* had heard. The Lord in the *Prophet Isaiah*, Chap. 54. vers. 9. speaks of the removall of his peoples affliction under that notion, *For this is as the waters of Noah unto me*, for as I have sworn that the waters of *Noah* should no more go over the earth, so have I sworn that I would not be wroth with thee, &c. So here, thy afflictions shall be as the waters of *Noah* that are past. Thy troubles swell now very high, thou sufferest a deluge, an inundation of sorrows, but they shall be dried up, and shall not leave so much as their slime for a token that they have been there.

Or more generally, as an allusion to all sudden torrents, or the rising of waters upon the fall of great raies in the southern parts of the world, of which the 126. *Psalms* is a great proof; waters in those regions swell in a moment, and are down almost as soon as swoln; having no constant fountain to feed them, they cannot continue. So saith he, a mighty flood of trouble and sorrow overwhelmed thee, but it shall quickly dry up, it is but a cloud, a storm, it will passe away and be spent sooner then thou dreamest, even so soon, that thou shalt be like one that dreameth.

Secondly,

Secondly, It may be taken as a proverbial speech, *Thou shalt remember it as waters that passe away*; that is, you shall not remember it; it shall be as it had not been. Who can tell what waters have past? or where to finde those waters which are past? to remember a thing, as waters that passe away, is to let it passe out of memory. Some things leave lasting impressions behind them, but a sudden-passing water doth not.

Thirdly, We may interpret it thus, *Thou shalt remember it as waters that passe away*; that is, thou shalt remember it as that which shall never return again, or is quite gone, and shall never trouble thee any more. Some expound that of the Prophet so, *affliction shall not rise up the second time* (Nah. 1. 9.) (which others, and I think rightly, interpret of an utter consumption, there shall be no need for affliction to come the second time, for it shall spoil all at first: Thy affliction shall make a totall devastation.) Yet it may be taken in the sense suggested. Affliction shall not rise up the second time, that is, *thou shalt not be afflicted the second time*: The waters of affliction are passed away, and shall not flow back again. Job (Chap. 8. 4.) speaks of *waters forgotten of the foot*; he means (as is conceived) waters so deep, that no man could passe thorow them, and are therefore said to be *forgotten of the foot*, because no foot had passed them of a long time, nor was any like to passe them any more. Thus also an affliction thorow which a man shall never passe again, may be called a *forgotten affliction*. Hence when the Prophet had said (Nah. 1. 9.) that *affliction should not rise up the second time*, he adds, from the Lord, *vers. 12. I have afflicted thee, I will afflict thee no more*. This I apprehend as the proper meaning of the text in hand, *Thou shalt forget thy misery, or if thou dost remember it, thou shalt remember it but as waters that are passed away*. Thy misery will be as nothing to thee, and shall never return upon thee.

Hence Observe,

The memory of miseries which shall never return to hurt us, comforts us.

It is our joy to remember those things which were our sorrow, when we are beyond the borders of sorrow; such a remembrance is as joyous, as the remembrance of an evil, whose return we fear is grievous. The very suspicion that an affliction will renew, regreth our affliction. Then we feed heartily upon the good which is before us, when we are freed from the afterclaps or after-

*Proverbialum
non hunc lo-
quendi modum
quo significa-
tur aliquid
sive boni sive
mali quod jam
præterit nihil
esse reliquum.
Sanct.*

*to mention
nothing more*

*miserrima
maiorum im-
pendentium ex-
pectatio. Merl.*

after reckonings of evil. That the Israelites were delivered from those Egyptian taskmasters; was very sweet; but to see them at their heels and upon their backs again was exceeding bitter: Hence the Lord to relieve them from those thoughts, gave them this assurance by Moses (Exod. 14. 13.) *The Egyptians whom ye have seen to day, ye shall see them again no more for ever.* It is not so great a losse not to see, as it is a trouble to see what we would not; The King of Babylon slew the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes, before he put out his eyes (Jer. 39. 8, 7. doublelesse the putting of his eyes to that use, pained him more then the putting of them out. Now as it is a misery worse then blindness, to see that which grieves us, so it is a mercy as good as sight it self, not to see what would grieve us, especially to receive a faithfull promise, that we shall see it again no more for ever. And as it adds to the affliction of a man in misery, to remember that he hath enjoyed friends and good daies, which he shall not enjoy nor see again any more for ever. So it adds to the comfort of a man encompassed about with mercies, to remember he hath endured sorrows, and been oppressed by enemies, which we shall not endure nor be oppressed by, no nor see again any more for ever. This is the priviledge of the Saints, in reference to that greatest enemy *sin*, they remember their sins as waters that are passed away, they shall never return to hurt them, much lesse to condemn them. Thus to remember our sins on earth is a piece of heaven, and will be a great part of our happinesse in heaven; where we shall say in highest triumph and exultation of spirit concerning sin and Satan, death and sorrow, or whatsoever hath the face, or deserves to wear the name of a mysticall Egyptian. These Egyptians whom we have seen and felt so often in the daies of our mortality, we shall not see, no nor so much as see them again any more for ever.

*Adferum est
fuisse salicem.*

JOB Chap. 11. Vers. 17, 18, 19, 20.

*And thine age shall be clearer than the noon-day; thou shalt shine forth, thou shalt be as the morning.
And thou shalt be secure, because there is hope, yea, thou shalt dig about thee, and thou shalt sake thy rest in safety.
Also thou shalt lie down, and none shall make thee afraid: yea, many shall make suite unto thee.
But the eyes of the wicked shall fail, and they shall not escape, and their hope shall be as the giving up of the ghost.*

THis latter part of the Chapter, consisteth (as was touched before) of divers motives and encouragements, which Zophar bestows on Job, to hearten him on in hearkening to his counsel. As he was encouraged before by a promise that his present troubles should suddenly expire, so here, that ancient mercies should suddenly revive. As if Zophar had said, *Thou shalt be blessed not only by deliverance from, or removals of evil; thou shalt not only forget misery, and have the prints of thy afflictions wiped out; but thou shalt be fairly stamped with fresh favours, and the best of blessings shall be heaped upon thee.* This he expresseth in those elegant metaphors and comparisons.

Vers. 17. *Thine age shall be clearer than the noon-day, thou shalt shine forth, thou shalt be as the morning.*

All which he exemplifieth in plain assertions, assuring him that he shall spend the latter part of his life in safety, *vers. 18. Thou shalt be secure, &c.* In freedom and honour, *vers. 19. None shall make thee afraid, yea, many shall make suite unto thee.* The ungodly are not so, *vers. 20. The eyes of the wicked shall fail, &c.*

Thine age.

The Hebrew word signifies time in generall, or the whole state of this world. David prayeth to be delivered from the men of this world, or of this age; (*Psal. 17. 14.*) he means it of men who have nothing beyond the world, all whose estate lies on this side heaven. The word signifies also the particular age of a mans

I

life;

Thine age, secundum, avarum, sed et vitia carnis, etiam cum castis, non significat, quasi per mortem, et

*Quasi meridiana fulgor con-
surgit tibi ad
vesperam. Vulg.*

life: and here distinctly the latter part or old age of a mans life. *Thine age*, that is, *thine old age*, of the latter part of thy life, of which thou seemest to make little reckoning, upon which thou lookest as if it were not worth the having; that latter part of thy life, of which thou say'st in thine heart, surely it will be as death to me, it will be full of death and darknesse, of diseases and of weakneses, the strength of it will be but labour and sorrow; that evening of thy life, of which thou judgest (according to the experience of others) surely it will be dim and misty, cloudy and uncomfortable, even that age of thine shall be

Clearer then the noon-day.

The letter is, *Thine age shall rise above the noon-day.* The noon-day is taken two wayes. Sometimes for extreame heat, and sometimes for extreame light.

Esto illis jucundum refrigerium à meridiano astu. Jun.
First, At noon, we expect the extremity of heat, the sun of persecution is signified by the noon-day. *Isa. 16. 3. Make thy shadow at the night in the midst of the noon-day.* That is, be a refreshing and a protection to my people when their troubles are at the hottest. And *Cor. 1. 7. Tell me where thou makest thy flock to rest at noon*, that is, in the heat of persecution. The Church desired to understand where to shelter, what cooling place was to be had in the times of greatest tribulation.

Morum proverbiale est, luce meridiana clarescit, item lucernam accendit in meridie.
Secondly, Noon imports the clearest light, it is a common proverb when we affirm a thing to have the greatest clearnesse, to say, *It is as clear as the light at noon-day.* And *to light a candle at noon*, is a proverb of reproof to those, who trouble themselves to make that plain which hath no obscurity in it. And as noon is put for light, so light is often put for joy, and clearest light (such is that of the noon-day) for greatest joy, *light is sown for the righteous*, that is, they shall reap a harvest of joy.

Lux felicitatis symbolum. Vita jucunda et quasi Luana. mofa. Coc. Salma ite laudat tua. Merc.
When *Zophar* promiset, *Thine age shall be clearer than the noon-day*, his meaning is, thy latter end shall be full of comforts, and thou shalt rejoice in the serenity of thy condition.

Hence Observe,

God can make the worst part of our life, the best to us; and when we expect (according to the course of nature) the least good, he can compass us with the choicest good.

Old age is called the evil day (*Ecc. 1. 2. 1.*) and the description of it is given in termes very apposite unto this, *while the evil dayes come*

come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say I have no pleasure in them, while the sun, or the light, or the moon, or the stars be not darkened, nor the clouds return after the rain. He compar-
 eth old age to a gloomy day, when shadow falls after shadow, and
 cloud follows after cloud, yet the Lord can make that age
 which usually gives nothing but clouds and shadows, but moisture
 and wet, to be as clear as the light at noon, and as day as sun-
 shine. We need not fear our worst state, if God will undertake to mend
 it: be not troubled with tyring expectations of pain and weak-
 nesse, of diseases and sicknesses in old age, God is able to make
 thee, notwithstanding the disadvantages of nature, strong and
 healthy. Old age will be youth to us as his word. Abraham was
 not troubled at an hundred years old, when God promised him,
 thou shalt have a sonne. Sarahs dead womb was no impediment
 when God said thou shalt conceive. Young men shall faine, and old
 men shall renew their strength like the eagle, when God will have
 it so. The summer of your lives shall be a winter, and your winter
 a summer, your cloudy dayes shall be clearer than the noon, and
 your noon a cloud at his command, who made both summer and
 winter, sun and cloud. He that put nature into order, can order
 things against nature.

Thou shalt shine forth, thou shalt be as the morning.

This additionall clause heightens the sense of the former. The word which we translate, to shine forth, signifies also to *darken*. So Mr. Broughton renders, *Thy time shall passe the noon day, ob-*
scureness shall match the morning. And another thus, *If thou dost*
grow obscure or dark, yet thou shalt match the morning.

Our translators take Zophar continuing the metaphor of light, *Thine age shall be clearer than the noon day*, and here he shews, that
 it shall not be a standing, but an increasing light, the light of the
 morning, *Thou shalt be as the noon* in regard of the clearness of thy
 light, and *thou shalt be as the morning*, in regard of the increase and
 continuance of thy light. For though we have the greatest light at
 noon, yet that light is neer a declension. The Sun being come to his
 height, is in its vertical point, and every hour after noon (though
 we cannot perceive it) grows darker and darker, till the sha-
 dows of the night wrap up all: but the morning Sun is a rising
 Sun, which gains and gathers every moment. That's Solomon's
 description (Prov. 4. 18.) *The path of the righteous is as the*
morning

morning light that shineth more and more unto the perfect day. So then, these two are excellently joined together, to make up the highest expression of a prosperous estate; thy estate shall be so prosperous, in the degree of it, that it shall be clearer than the noon-day; and yet it shall be of such continuance, or rather of such increase, that it shall be as the morning; thou shalt be in a state of perfection yet receiving addition: though in a strict sense Philosophy defines that only perfect, to which nothing can be added; yet there is a kinde of perfection in receiving additions: Jobs state shall be so perfect, that it shall need no addition; and yet there shall be additions to its perfection, It shall be a noon for perfection, it shall be a morning for addition and augmentation; Thou shalt shine forth as the morning.

Hence Observe,

God is as able to continue his people in a high estate and to increase it, as to raise them to it.

Thy light shall be as the noon, and thou shalt shine forth as the morning. If the Lord please, he can stop the declinings and decayes even of temporalls, he can give us an everlasting noon in the things of this life, and he will certainly doe it in the life to come. He who causeth our Sun to ascend till it makes a noon, can command it to stand at noon, or ascend till it makes a clearer noon: As himself is higher then the highest, so he can make us higher, when we think our selves at the highest. As he makes darknesse of affliction darker to many who supposed it to be at the darkest, so he makes the light of joy lighter to many who supposed it to be at the lightest. Some whose state is darker then midnight, are yet as the evening encreasing in darknesse, and some whose age is clearer then the noon-day, are yet as the morning encreasing in light. Our evil dayes and our good dayes, our sorrows and our joyes, receive their limits from the hand of God. Our sorrows will every day be more sorrowfull unless God stop them, and our joyes will every day be more joyfull if God enlarge them.

Secondly, As the word signifies to obscure and darken, the sense appears thus, Thou shalt be clearer than the noon, and if any obscurity seize upon thee, yet thou shalt match the morning, thou shalt overcome that darknesse, and thy skie shall be clear again, the clouds shall break upon thee, day shall dawn, and comfort shall renew; Thy obscurity shall be as the morning, which disperseth darknesse, and conquers it by the approaching light. That promise

Consolation unquam deest in omnibus adversariis.

promise (*Isa 58. 10.*) is a clear exposition of this, *Thou shalt thy light rise in obscurity, and thy darkness be as the noon day*; that is, thy affliction shall be turned into consolation, and thy evil daies into good daies. The vulgar latin translates the former part of the verse thus, *Thou shalt be clear towards the evening*, or, *thy evening shall be clear*; the latter thus, *when thou thinkest thou art consumed, thou shalt be as Lucifer*, or, *as the morning star, even like the star which is the forerunner or messenger of the morning*. *Et quasi meridianus fulgor carfages tibi ad vesperam & cum te consumprum putaveris orietis ut Lucifer, Fulg.*

Hence Observe, *That God can quickly turn all our sorrows into joy, and our worst times into pleasant times.*

Thy obscurity shall match the morning. He can cause joy to rise out of sorrow, and turn our water into wine, our losses into gain; Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning, (*Psal 30. 5.*) And again, *Unto the upright there ariseth light in darkness.* (*Psal 112. 4.*) As the Sun of wicked men sets at noon, so the light of the Saints riseth at midnight: *Amos 8. 9.* *I will cause the Sun to go down at noon, and I will darken the earth in the clear day*; which text stands in as direct an opposition to this, as words can be pen'd. He who causeth the Sun to go down at noon, can command the Sun to rise at midnight; and he who darkens the earth in the clear day, lightens the earth in the darkest night. As natural, so civil and spiritual light and darkness take their turns, and make their changes as God decrees. It is the happinesse of the Saints in misery, that their friend and father can say unto their misery, *Be gone*, and to happinesse *Return*. The state of the Jews was obscured by the rising of that fiery fatal Comet *Haman*; but anon *Mordecai* arose like a bright star in their Horizon, and then, *the Jews had light and gladnesse, and joy, and honour*, *Hef. 8. 16.*

Thirdly, Compare this verse with the counsel before given; *Zophar* adviseth *Job* to seek unto God, and to humble himself before him; what shall be the fruit of it? *Things ago shall be clearer than the noon day, thou shalt shine forth, thou shalt be as the morning.*

Note from it.

When we are better, God usually makes our states better.

Turn thou to God, and God will turn thy darkness into light. The Prophet (*Isa 58. 10.*) having described a fast, and taught the Jews how to humble themselves aright before God, subjoins

this promise, then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and thy darkness be as the noon-day. When we depart out of the darkness of sin, the Lord bids the darkness of trouble to depart from us. While we cast ourselves down, he raiseth us up, and sets us in the glory of our enjoyments. We complain we are in darkness, but we forget that our sins stand in our light and hinder good things from us. As promotion comes neither from the east, nor from the west, nor from the south, but from God, so the stop of promotion comes not from any of those quarters, but from our selves: if we were empty God would fill us, if poor God would enrich us, if low and abased he would exalt us. That advice of the Apostle James speaks all this; *Humble your selves in the sight of the Lord and he shall lift you up*, (Chap. 4. 10.) As for those who being in darkness, kindle a fire, and compass themselves about with shades, that they may walk in the light of their own fire; and in the sparks that they have kindled; This shall they have from the hand of the Lord, they shall lie down in sorrow (Isa. 50. 11.) A man continuing in sin, shall find himself as much disappointed in labouring to get out of darkness into light by his own power, as in hoping that God will bring him out by his power.

Zophar goes on, and draws this general into particulars. There are five particular blessings laid down in the 18th and 19th verses, all which summed together make up the mercy of the 17th, viz. prosperity like the noon-day and comforts like the morning. The first is, *Thou shalt be secure because there is hope.*

Thou shalt be secure.

כח The word signifies an act not only of adherence but of assurance; not only of recumbency but of certainty: when the heart is fully settled and acquiesceth in the sufficiency and faithfulness of him who hath undertaken and stands up for our protection.

There is a double security.

First, Simul, accompanied with the neglect of good means, and with a presumption of a good end. Both are comprised in that rebuke given the false prophet (Jer. 28. 15.) *Thou makest this people trust (or secure) in a lie.*

Secondly, There is a security which ariseth from the strength of a vigorous faith grounded upon the promise and word of God; That's the security for which Zophar engageth; That sense is clearly given in the words following, *Thou shalt be secure because*

*Non simplicem
fidem sed cerri-
tudinem deo-
rat est sine for-
midine acqui-
escere in suffici-
entia prafidii
sui.*

*Spes illa solum
firmationem ha-
bet quia deo ni-
atur. Sancti.*

because there is hope; that is, because thou hast a firm word upon which to cast the anchor of thy hope. True hope is rooted in the promise, and fruited with peace. That is it which in this point we call security. When a lender hath the word of a good man for his money, he is said to have good security. How secure then may the Saints be, who have the word of the good God for their security?

Thou shalt be secure because there is hope.

That is, Thou shalt not only have a present good estate, and store of blessings in possession; but abundance in expectation; Hope is of good things to come; An assurance of what we have not, is as good a settlement to the heart as what we have; and he that can look for no more then he hath, can never have a settled heart. The hope of more is a richer inheritance then the inheriting of much. Were it not for hope the heart would break in evil times, and were it not for hope the heart would be unsatisfied in the best times. It is never well with us in this life till we can upon warrantable termes look beyond what we see. Vision will be enough for us in heaven, but on earth we cannot have a vision of any good thing which is enough. This makes the difference between the state of the Saints and of worldly men. We walk by faith, and not by sight; They walk by sight and not by faith. Faith leads us into the Treasury of God, sight leaves them among the treasures of men. Our best estate lies in invisibles; Sense is of things present or seen, which are but temporal; faith and hope are of things absent, and out of sight, which are eternal.

Further, These promissory words, *Thou shalt be secure because there is hope*, may referre,

First, To the attaining of a good condition. Secondly, To the increasing or bettering of that good condition to which he should attain. Thirdly, To the keeping or maintaining of the good which should be so increased. Thou shalt have a morning, there's good attained, thy morning shall rise up to a noon-day, there's good increased, thy noon shall not decline, there's good maintained; and because of all these hopes, thou shalt be secure; and all these hopes must meet to make up a full security.

Hence Observe,

Hope in God is the settlement and security of the soul.
There is a hope which is ill set, such a hope cannot settle us.

That

That hope which is right set is setting. Our hope is as the object it is upon which we hope; if we hope upon that which is sure, hope is itself sure, hope in God must needs be sure, because God is. So the Apostle argues: *God willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath, that by two immutable things in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have strong consolation; who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us, which hope we have as an anchor of the soul both sure and steadfast, (Heb. 6. 17, 18, 19.)* God is the Saints anchor hold, they cannot be removed by any storm, when once they have fastened upon him. As every one that hath this hope purifieth himself even as God is pure: So every one that hath this hope may assure himself because God is sure. *He will be true to all the ends of the earth: and hope in him shall never endure in a full enjoyment of himself in heaven.*

Observe, secondly,

That the condition of a godly man can never be desperate.

Whatsoever he wants in the world he cannot want hope; he hath somewhat in hope, though he hath nothing in hand: He hath much in the promise though little in his purse: He hath plenty of bread in the word, when he hath scarce a loaf, or when he hath greatest scarcity at his table. He may expect more of the world than he hath, though he hath much, and he may look upon all that is in the world, as his, though none of it be his: He hath a right to all, and he shall receive as much as he needs: If lesse then all will not support his needs, he shall have all; God will give every believer a world by himself, rather then not give him as much as he hath promised. If the good things which God hath already made be not enough to make good every word which he hath spoken, he will speak another word, which shall make more. *As the heaven and the earth which we created shall passe rather then his word, so he will create a new heaven and a new earth, that all his words may stand.*

There is a textual reading of these words, given by some, which reaches the sense of this observation; *Be thou confident or secure while there is hope*; So it is a counsel; not a promise, An exhortation, not a doctrinal assertion, or it is the use of the former doctrine, shewing us what becomes us to doe, when we hear what God hath spoken. *When God makes us a promise; it is our duty to rest upon him in it: Promises are the pillars of the soul.*

Christ

Confide dum
species. 3^o w.

Christ is the substantial pillar of the soul, the promises are declarative pillars. As it is the priviledge of beleevers, that they may, to it is their duty, and they must rest upon those pillars. They are invited to close with every word of God, and embrace every offer which he makes. The word is spoken in vain, mercies are tendered in vain, except we act faith and pitch our hope upon them. Shall we be confident when men (who are a lye and their breath is in their nostrils) give us hopes, they will stand our friends and help us; and shall we not when the great, the faithful and everliving God saith he will be our friend and helper!

There are three considerations which should make us hope whensoever God offers us a word.

First consider, what God hath done. *Experience works hope.* Look into your own experiences, and ask after the experiences of others. The report of both will be, *Thou Lord hast not forsaken them that seek thee* (Psal. 9. 10) who would not seek him who hath never forsaken those that seek him?

Secondly consider, who it is that ingageth: It is God; A God all sufficient to make good his word, there is nothing too hard for him: and as not one iota or tittle of his commands, so not one of his promises shall fail, all shall be fulfilled. He gives promises and he can create performances. *The promise is good, but the promiser is better*, therefore be thou secure and trust when thou hast his promise.

Thirdly, Consider the relation which God beareth to his people. It is not an enemy, that speaks to ensnare and circumvent us, to mock and delude us; it is not a just man who speaks, who (though he mean well, and hath a minde to do what he speaks) yet may soon become unable: but it is God, in relation a friend to us, a father to us, one who speaks what he meaneth, and is able to doe what he speaks. It is God who is able, and who no accident can disable, he it is that speaks unto us. If God tell thee thy light shall be clearer then the noon, that thou shalt shine forth as the morning, be thou confident, act faith, yea let faith have a perfect work, then it hath, when we trust perfectly, *Be secure because there is hope*; That's the first priviledge promised, The second is this,

Tea thou shalt dig about thee.

Some expound this digging tropologically: for the works of

holy worship and obedience to God. These are a kinde of digging in Gods earth.

Others, *Thou shalt dig*, That is, thou shalt provide they grave. As if he had said, *I promise the favour, not only while thou livest, but when thou art dead*, thou shalt have a comely buriall, and be laid in thy sepulcher with honour. The words which follow, [*Thou shalt take thy rest in safety*] are interpreted to fill up his sense, *Thou shalt be laid in thy grave, and when thou art there none shall violate thy ashes, or disquiet thy dust*. It is threatned as a sore curse (*Jer. 8. 1.*) that the bones of the deceased Kings and Princes, &c. should be pull'd out of their graves, and should be spread before the Sun and Moon and all the host of heaven, whom they had loved. Now here (say they) *Job* is assured, that none shall stir his bones, or pillage his tombe, when he should sleep with his fathers in the grave. But I passe it.

Thirdly, *Thou shalt dig about thee*, that is, thou shalt draw a line of defence or a trench about thee; So Mr. Broughton, *Thou shalt entrench, and lye down safely*. The moles safety (who is named from this word in the Hebrew) is in earthing himself; and so is the safety of men in warre. Thus it is an expreffion of greatest safety, thou shalt be as safe as if thou wert fortified with walls and trenches, or hadst planted bulworks round about thee.

Fourthly, Others think that *Zophar* alludes to the fashion of those times; Either first, In their removings, when taking up their tents, and intending to pitch them in a new place, they digged to let in the stakes and fasten them; *Yes, to dig*, is no more but this, thou shalt pitch thy tent, or set up thy tabernacle and be in safety: God can protect thee in a tent as well as in a castle. We call the furniture of our houses, our moveables, but they had moveable houses. Or secondly, That he alludes to their digging of wells, which was in those ages and places a noted businesse, as we may reade in *Genesis*. So, *Thou shalt dig*, is, thou shalt make provision for thy flocks and cattel (water being one part is put for all) and none shall contend with thee; as the herdsmen of *Isaac* and of *Gerar* did, *Gen. 26. 20.*

Fifthly, I rather conceive *digging* is put either strietly for tilling and manuring the earth, or, more largely, for the labour of any calling; *Thou shalt dig about thee*, that is, thou shalt follow thy businesse in the place where providence hath cast thee, digging

*Ad sepulcrum
pertinet, q. d.
sepulcrus jacebis
securus. Aquin.*

*Facies secu-
rus velut fossa
circumducta.
Tig. Securus
ages acsi vallo
& fossa muni-
tur. Vatab.*

*Puto alludi ad
morem Arabum
qui subinde ta-
bernacula sua
& sedes move-
bant. Merc.*

*Fodiendi ope-
ram ad rem a-
griariam refert
Cajetanus.*

ging is put for the whole service of his life, *Luk. 16. 3.*) the unjust steward when he feared to be called to an account, queries with himself, *What shall I doe? for my Lord taketh away my stewardship; I cannot dig*, that is, I know not how to put my self to any labour, or calling, especially to a calling of hand labour, and I am ashamed to beg, what will become of me? But what privilege is there in this that *he should dig?* I answer first, It is a mercy to have a calling. But secondly, When it is said *Thou shalt dig*; he means two things futher. First, thou shalt thrive and prosper in thy calling; Thou shalt gain by digging. Secondly, Thou shalt be safe in thy calling, *thou shalt dig without fear or danger*, without let or hinderance. When *Jobs* estate was surprized, his servants were some plowing, other keeping sheep, all at work. Now it is promised that he and his shall dig in quietnesse. To clear which sense, we may connect the later clause of the verse (which I have proposed and shall open as a third distinct privilege) with this. *Thou shalt dig about thee; and thou shalt rest in safety*; That is, in labour thou shalt have rest, or, the rest of safety shall be thy portion, in all the motions of thy labour.

Hence Observe,

It is a great blessing when we freely enjoy the exercise of our callings.

It is our duty to have a calling, and it is a mercy to go on profitably and peaceably in it.

There are some (though I cannot much approve the interpretation) who expound that (*Cant. 7. 1.*) where Christ speaks to the Church, *How beautiful are thy feet with shoes?* to this sense, thy feet are beautiful in thy calling, when a man hath his shoes on, he is fit for businesse, and his feet are never so beautiful as when he is at honest businesse; As the Saints have a spiritual and heavenly calling, in which they deal with Christ and trade towards heaven: So Christ will have them employed in earthly callings and maintain dealings with men; one calling honours and supports the other; our general calling gets a blessing upon the special, and in our special callings we have occasion to shew forth our virtues and graces, and so to honour our general calling: It is a high commendation when we can say to a Christian, *How beautiful are thy feet with shoes?* that is, thou art holy when thou art about worldly things, as well as when thou art about

spiritual things; This is a truth, and may be a good allusion, though not a proper exposition of that Scripture: Now as our feet are beautiful with shoes, when we go on justly, and righteously, so when we go on thrivingly, quietly and peaceably in our callings; when though we have much labour, yet we have no sorrow in our callings: when though we work hard for the bread we eat, yet we get bread to eat, and others do not eat the bread for which we have wrought.

And thou shalt take thy rest in safety,

שכב
Cubare, cubat
qui non dormit:
hoc verbum de morte
usurpatur hinc

שכבתי
mortui. Druf.
הנחמתי את
עון ימי ו
לחמיני

Sept

That's a third privilege. The word signifies a lying down, whether in the day time for a short refreshment; or in the night for sleep. And so it is no more but this, As thou shalt dig, and thrive at thy work, so thou shalt take thy rest in safety, thy repose in the day, and thy sleep in the night shall be sweet unto thee, *Ishbosheth* was slain at noon upon his bed, the night hath been fatal to many.

Note from it,

It is a mercy to enjoy rest with quiet.

They who are continually hurried with fears, who (like *Job*) have had their estates plundered and spoiled, would count it so. How many thousands, lately, in this kingdom, have as it was threatened (*Deut.* 28. 66.) been in fear day and night, who when they have lain down, could not rest an hour in safety? The Scripture gives us many promises about this blessing, *Prov.* 3. 24. *When thou liest down, thou shalt not be afraid, yea, thou shalt lie down, and thy sleep shall be sweet, Psal.* 127. 2. *So he giveth his beloved sleep. Psal.* 3. 5. *I laid me down and slept, I awaked, for the Lord sustained me. Psal.* 4. 8. *I will both lay me down in peace and sleep, for thou Lord makest me dwell in safety.* When the Lord undertakes our protection we may sleep on both ears; that is, securely and comfortably; when he watcheth over us we shall rest though thousands watch against us. A good night's rest is the good gift of God, and deserves daily acknowledgements by man.

The fourth privilege follows.

Verse 19. Thou shalt lie down and none shall make thee afraid.

Some interpret this as a repetition, or but as an addition to the former; but we may thus difference them; That promised rest to his person and family, this to his estate and cattel. The word

word (*Rabat*) here used, properly signifies the lying down of צרר cattell in their fields and folds. Thus understood, it is a distinct *Propria de gregibus*; mercy, Thou shalt be quiet in thy bed, as also thy cattell, thy sheep and oxen, shall all lye down quietly in their stals and pastures, none shall stir them up, much lesse take them away. But some may object. The text doth not say, Thy cattell, &c. shall lie down, But thou shalt lie down. I answer, A man and his estate, whether in things living or without life, may be wrapt up in one, we are well and in peace (according to common speech) when ours and all that we have are well.

Hence Note,

A peaceable condition, even for our goods and cattell, is a remarkable favour.

That our estates are quiet as well as our persons, that our beasts can lie down safely as well as our children, is to be numbred among our mercies. The Psalmist prayeth hard for it (*Psal.* 144. 13, 14.) *That our sheep may bring forth thousands, and our thousands in our streets, That our oxen may be strong to labour, that there be no breaking in, nor going out, that there be no complaining in our streets:* and least any should judge these but small matters, he casts them up into a great summe, even the summe of all our desires, *Happinesse, Happy is that people that is in such a case.* Though neither all our happinesse nor our chief happinesse consisteth in these outward things; yet such an enjoyment of these things is a happinesse.

There is a fifth priviledge greater then any of these, and yet but an outward priviledge, This makes the sun of his promised prosperity as the noon-day in his highest zenith of perfection.

Tea many shall make sute unto thee.

The Hebrew is, *they shall intreat thy face.* And the word which we translate *entreat*, signifies also *to weary*, or *give one out*, *to be pained either in minde or body*; and when it is joined, — as here, with the word *face*, or *countenance*, it signifies to weary one with prayer and intreaty, that is, to use many intreaties, so many intreaties as weary a man to hear them. That parable which teacheth that men ought alwayes to pray and not to faint, represents us with a judge which feared not God, nor regarded men, and with an importunate widow, who came unto him saying, *Avenge me of mine adversary, and he would not for a while; But* afterward

ה'ה

*Deluit corpore
vel animo, &
cum nomine*

פנים

*Facies, vultus;
est fatigare aliquem precibus;
— precibus quibus
fatigent virgines sanctae minus audientem carnaliter vestram.* Horat. l. 1. Od. 2.

afterward he said within himself, *Though I fear not God nor regard man, yet because this widow troubleth me I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me*, (Luk. 18. 5. As many are weary of prayer, so some are wearied with prayers, and grant the petitions of the poor, not to releve them, but to ease themselves. So the meaning is this, *They shall make many suits to thee*, even as many as are made to him that is wearied with suitors; though it be a great honour to have suitors, yet there is a burthen in it too; The faces of Kings and Magistrates are wearied with hearing supplications.

Others understand *face* here (as it is often taken in the Hebrew) for anger and displeasure, and give the elegancy of it thus, *Many shall abate, or weary thine anger*; when they hear that thou art angry or displeased with them, they shall make so many suits and petitions to thee, as shall take off thine anger and bring it down. It is hard to be angry with those that are humbled; when God is angry, we may be said to weary his anger by prayer, or to cause him to give over being angry. The Church wonders when the anger of God outstood so many prayers. *O Lord God of hosts how long wilt thou be angry against the prayers of thy people?* (Psal. 80. 4.) The anger of God can hold out as long as his love, but God will appear weary of his anger, when we are not weary of praying to him. We weary the anger of God and make it faint with supplications, when we supplicate him earnestly and humbly without wearinesse and fainting. As sin and unbelief are said to weary the patience of God, (Isa. 7. 13. & 43. 24.) So prayer and faith (or the prayer of faith) are said to weary the wrath of God. In this sense the word is frequently used, (Psa. 119. 58.) *I intreated thy favour (or wearied thy face) with my whole heart*: Saul speaks in the same form of words (1 Sam. 13. 12.) *I said the Philistines will come down now upon me in Gilgal; and I have not made supplication unto (or wearied the face of) God*. So then the blessing here promised Job, is, that many (as subjects to Princes, and tenants to their Lords, yea as man to God) should make their sute and do homage to him. As if Zophar had said, *Many now despise and undervalue thee because of thine affliction, and heretofore many came boldly to disquiet thy person and spoil thy substance; but the case shall be so altered with thee, that they who before despised thee, shall honour and reverence thee*, (As many of them who mocked Christ, shortly after adored him,) *they that heretofore*

*Et suspiciens
& colens, tibi
supplices erunt
propter divitias
& dignitatem.
Dul.*

fore terrified thee shall be afraid of thee; and shall humble themselves before thee. They shall fear thy power, and beg thy favour, with renewed supplications, till it shall be a weariness to hear them. Thou shalt be more able to destroy them then deny them. Only take my advice, and hearken to my counsel. Be thou earnest in seeking unto God, and others shall quickly seek unto thee; doe thou make sue to him, and weary his face, and thou shalt see many will come and weary thy face with suites; Thy very enemies and unkindest friends will be glad not only of thy company, but of a good word or a good look from thee. And in this Zophar spake truer, in reference unto himself and his friends, then he was a ware of; For as others, so these three, by the command of God (chap. 42.) were glad to come and intreat the face of Job, that he would entreat the face of God for them.

Hence Observe,

First, *It is an honour to have others sue or seek to us.*

In this God gives us a share, and makes us partakers with himself in one of his greatest honours; It is the honour of God that all creatures sue to him and depend upon him, that all need his help and that so many petition him for it every day. *He is the God hearing prayer, therefore to him shall all flesh come.* The highest glory which God hath on earth, is, that so many thousands come thronging to and knocking at the gate of heaven with tears and prayers. One reason why Princes and Magistrates are called gods, is because such as are oppressed or in want make supplication unto them, *Prov. 19. 6. Many will intreat the favour of the Prince;* It is the subjects duty to do it, and the doing of it is the Princes honour: *Flatterers are the disgrace of Princes, but suitors are a grace unto them.* That civil power is drawn down to the lees, or is at the lowest ebbe, which no man or but few sue unto. And the lowest ebbe both of Zions spiritual power and outward splendour is thus exprest *Jer. 30. 17. Thus is Zion whom no man seeketh after.* Zion was once sought unto, for thither the Tribes went up, they went up thither to worship the Lord: and when the glory of Zion should be restored, the Prophet assures her *Isa. 60. 14. The sons of them that afflicted thee shall come bending unto, and all they that despised thee shall bow themselves down at the soles of thy feet; And they shall call thee the city of the Lord, the Zion of the holy one of Israel. Isa. 45. 14. The labour of Egypt, and merchandise of Ethiopia, Sec. they shall come over, and they shall fall*

fall down unto thee, they shall make supplication unto thee, saying, Surely God is in thee, and there is none else, there is no God. To make supplication to any one, either supposeth him to be a God, or that much of God is in him. (*Psal. 45. 12.*) The rich among the people shall intreat thy favour (it is the word in the text) not only poor mean underlings, but the worldly rich among the people shall seek thy heavenly riches, the honourable shall think it an honour to join in communion with thee. The Philadelphian Angel is promised this high privilege, *Rev. 3. 9.* Behold I will make them of the Synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie, behold I will make them come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee, that is, I will make them submit and sue unto thee as unto my speciall favourite. The glory of Christ himself is thus described (*Isa. 11. 10.*) There shall be a root of Jesse, and to him shall the Gentils seek. To seek or make suit to a man, speaks reverence to and worth in his person, It speaks ability to help, and supposeth willingness; it speaks a fear of having that power used against us, and an earnest desire of having it improved for us; honour comes in from all quarters to those who have many suitors.

Secondly, To whom, and upon what termes doth Zophar make this promise? He makes it unto Job, and to him in case he should seek unto God and humble himself before him.

Observe,

Holinesse towards God, makes us honourable and venable among men.

Omnes quodamodo mali esse coguntur ne vitas habeantur.
Sal. lib. 4. ad
Eccl. Cathol.

I grant some are therefore despised because they are holy, and not a few continue in or turn to unholinesse lest they should be despised. Holinesse which is the beauty of men and Angels, yea of God himself, is accounted a blot among unholy ones; yet all they who are truly are holy honourable in themselves, and they are honourable in the eyes and esteem of many others. Though they are thought unworthy to live in the world, yet the world is not worthy of them, *Heb. 11. 38.* There is more worth in the least grace then in all earthly glory. Them that honour me (saith God, *1 Sam. 2. 30.*) I will honour, and they that despise me, shall be lightly esteemed. God is the fountain of honour, and yet he receives honour. We give much honour unto God when we sincerely seek unto him and obey him; they that honour God thus, shall have a like honour, others shall seek to them and obey them.

Since

Since thou wast precious in my sight thou hast been honourable Isa. 43. 4. All are ready to honour those who are precious in the eyes of earthly Kings, and sue for the favour of their favourites. This in a proportion is true of every one that is precious in the eyes of God, he shall be honoured, sometimes in the eyes of worldly men, but always in the eyes of men fearing God. There is a spiritual excellency stamp't upon the face of the meanest servant of God: they that are spiritual see and reverence it. The citizen of Zion is described among other qualifications by this also, he is a man, *in whose eyes a vile person is contemned, but he honoureth them that fear the Lord.* As grace is honourable, so it is a sign of grace to honour those who are gracious.

These are the promises made by *Zophar* to encourage *Job*, both in general, ver. 17. and in particulars, ver. 18, and 19. In the 20th he draws up the conclusion of his speech, setting down the contrary estate and condition of wicked men, and by consequence the estate of *Job* if he should continue (as he supposed him) wicked. While he spake of mercy, he spake in the second person, here he speaks of judgement in the third.

Verse 20. *But the eyes of the wicked shall fail, and they shall not escape, and their hope shall be as the giving up of the ghost.*

As if *Zophar* had said, *If thou dost persist in thy sin, thou maiest look for good till thy eyes ake, and never be blessed with the sight of it; or thy condition shall grow yet more sad, so sad, that thy eyes shall be pained to see it, and thou shalt have no hope to escape it, or if thou hast, it shall be a dying hope, even like the giving up of the ghost.*

Here are three branches of this description concerning the opposite condition of wicked men.

First, *Their eyes shall fail*, in looking for good.

Secondly, *They shall not escape*, present evil, if they hope they shall, Then

Thirdly, *Their hope shall be as the giving up of the ghost.*

The eyes of the wicked shall fail.

The failing of the eyes may be considered two waies. There is first a natural failing of the eyes through age, as also through extremity of want and affliction (which is an accident unto nature) The eyes of the wild asses are said to *fail* because there was

*Hebraismus est
qua extrema
describitur vi-
rium exte-
nuatio atque
defectus ad
mortem usque
BOLD.*

no grasse, Jer. 14. 6. God threatens the Jews with such troubles as should consume their eyes, Levit. 26. 16. When Jonathan 1 Sam. 14. 29. wanted food, his eyes were dim, and as soon as he had tasted a little honey, see I pray you (saith he) how mine eyes have been enlightened because I tasted a little of this honey. Neither of these ways are we to understand it here. Secondly, There is a failing of the eyes in a moral sence: Though the optick vertue of the eye be like that of *Moses*, which was as strong and clear at a hundred and twenty years old, as at twenty, yet when a man is disappointed of the thing which he looks for, his eyes are said to fail. The failing of our eyes is the disappointment of our hopes. And the reason of that expression is, because the eye is the instrument, by which we look up, or look out for that, which is the desire, and would be (as we conceive) the satisfaction of our souls. Yet further, the eyes may be said to fail two ways.

*Dum expectant
bonum & non
assequuntur.
Sic consumptio
oculorum su-
mitur in Scrip-
tura. Rab. Sol.*

First, (As before.) When we obtain not what we have long expected: So the captive Jews complain *Lam. 4. 17. As for us, our eyes as yet failed for our vain help: in our watching we have waited for a nation that could not save us.* Job in vindication of his integrity professeth, *that he never caused the eyes of the widow to fail* Chap. 31. 16.) that is, he neither made them stay over long for an answer, nor did he chide them away presently with a bad one. For,

*Videndo & in-
videndo lan-
guescunt. Invi-
dia est oculo-
rum dolor.*

Secondly, This failing of the eyes doth arise from the sight of that which we would not see, as well as from the not seeing of what we would. *To meet with that which we look not for, is as troublesome as not to meet with that for which we look.* And as want of that good which we would enjoy, so envy at the good which another enjoys is a pain unto the eyes. Envy is the worst disease of the eye: when a man seeth another flourish in prosperity and in peace, whom he hates, that monster envy tortures him, and his eyes begin to ake.

In both or either of these senses we may understand it here.

First thus, Wicked men shall look long enough for any good before it comes, their eyes shall fall out of their heads with looking for good because it comes not.

*De Jobi e-
mulatoribus &
invidis hac ar-
bitor intelligen-
da. BOLD.*

Secondly, *Their eyes shall fail*, that is, they shall see the righteous in such prosperity, and raised up to such lustre and glory, that they shall not be able to bear it. This some give as the peculiar intent of the place. For though the assertion be applicable

to all wicked men, yet it ſeems to aim chiefly at thoſe who inſulted over *Job* in his affliction. Theſe mens eyes, ſaith *Zophar*, ſhall be dazled and ſink in their heads, at the ſplendour of that reſtitution which God will make in thy eſtate, if thou wilt but return to God and repent. *They who mocked thy fall, ſhall be amazed at thy riſing.*

This firſt claufe taken in connection with the counſel before given, yeelds us this Obſervation.

The prayers of the Saints draw down good upon themſelves, and trouble upon their adverſaries.

Prayer is an offensive weapon as a well as defensive: as it protects us from evil and attaineth good for us, ſo it wounds our enemies and obſtructs the paſſages of their good. What hinders the deſires of wicked men and breaks their projects? what ſtops the courſe of their counſels? Some poor ſoul, perhaps many are praying againſt them, and then, the eyes of the wicked ſhall fail, they ſhall never partake of their expectations. There is a deſtroying power in the prayers of the Saints, as well as a ſaving and a helping power. The witneſſes have a flame at their lips, fire proceedeth out of their mouthes which devoureth their enemies (*Rev. xi.*) which moſt interpret to be their prayers: they pray their enemies to deſtruction, they pray them into diſappointments; their enemies lay deſignes, and prayer diſmounſeth their deſignes, or turns their Artillery againſt their own breſts.

Secondly, Take the interpretations given of theſe words in their own compaſſe. Then

Obſerve firſt:

It is a vexation to wicked men, a very pain to their eyes, to ſee the proſperity of godly men.

A good man is an eye-ſore to thoſe that are evil. *Haman* was in an high eſtate, a great man and full of honour, yet *Mordecai* was an eye-ſore to him; *Hammans* eyes failed when he ſaw him, and therefore after he had made report to his friends and to his wife, of the glory of his riches, and the multitude of his children, and all the things wherein the King had promoted him, &c. he melts into this ſad and diſcontented concluſion, yet all this availerh me nothing, ſo long as I ſee *Mordecai* the Jew ſitting at the Kings gate, *Eſth. 5. 13.* All the pictures in the Kings gallery, did not pleaſe and feed the eye of *Haman* ſo much as the ſight of *Mordecai*

deceit sitting at the Kings gate vexed him.

Secondly. Observe,

Wicked men shall never obtain the good things they long for and gape after.

Their hopes shall be fruitlesse, their projects succesles, their labour shall be labour in vain. The best are sometimes put to it very hard, their refuge and their hopes fail them long, though not for ever, *Psal. 69. 3. Mine eyes fail while I wait for my God.* David waited so long that he was even weary with waiting, yet God came at last. The stubborn Jews are threatned, *Deut. 28. 32. Thy Sons and thy Daughters shall be given to another people, and thine eyes shall look and fail with longing for them all the day long.* Sifera's Mother and her wife Ladies looked long through the lattice for his coming, but he came not at all. The eyes of the wicked shall fail indeed, they shall fail with waiting upon their idols and vanities, upon their lusts and lies, upon their relations and friends, upon their policies and plottings: It should make the Saints to lift up their heads and their eyes with confidence, that God will cause the eyes of wicked men to fail.

And they shall not escape.

מנוס אבר
מנוס

Effugium peribit ad iis.

As they shall not receive the good which they expect, so they shall not be able to deliver themselves from the evil which they fear. *They shall not escape;* the Hebrew is, *their refuge shall fail them;* Mr. Broughton, *Their refuge shall be forlorn.* You may take it either in reference to their escaping the hand of men, or to their escaping the hand of God. They shall not escape the hand of men, their refuge shall fail them there. When once *Saul* was forsaken of God, he could not escape the hand of the *Philistines*, see *1 Sam. 28.* what means he made to escape them; whom he had often conquered, he goes to the devil for help, but he could not escape, *Nothing shall doe them good who are forsaken of God.* And if they cannot escape the hands of men, much lesse shall they be able to escape the hand of God. As his hand is not shortned to save, so not to punish. Where he resolves to strike, he can. *They shall not escape.* This intimates two things.

1. The falseness of those props and supports, whether persons or things, upon which they leaned; *1 (saith David, Psal. 42. 4.) looked on my right hand, and beheld, but there was no man that*

that would know me, refuge failed me: The help of man often fails good men, though the help of God never fails them. The help of man often fails wicked men, and the help of God fails them ever. They may look in a streight not only on the right hand and on the left, that is, on all creatures, but upward also, on God himself, and yet find no refuge. God will not deliver wicked men, and others shall not. Nothing can save him whom God will destroy, or give up to destruction.

2. The vanity of their own hopes, they have great hopes that they shall get off and out-run their dangers, but they cannot. Their sorrows shall be too swift of foot for them, yea their sorrows shall pursue them as upon eagles wings. *They shall not escape.*

Hence Observe,

There is no escaping the hand of God.

His is a long hand, every thing is within the reach of it. His foot is a swift foot, therefore *the flight shall perish from the swift, and the strong shall not strengthen his force, neither shall the mighty deliver himself, neither shall he stand that handleth the bowe, and he that is swift of foot shall not deliver himself,* Amos 2. 14. When a prevailing enemy comes, there's no fighting with him, but there may be an escape from him. *A good pair of beels may doe us service where hands cannot.* But when a people can neither fight nor flee, neither charge nor retreat, their case is desperate. There is no getting from that vengeance which God sendeth to attach and apprehend his enemies. *As all outward helps shall fail those whom God will not help,* so God rejects the confidences which wicked men have in him. On that supposition *Rabshakeb* thought to dash the confidence of *Hezekiah*, and to periwade him that he should not escape. *Is not this he in whom thou trustest* (saith he) *whose high places and whose altars thou hast taken away? Thou trustest in God, but will God deliver thee when thou hast thus dishonoured him? They that destroy the instituted worship of God, have little reason to hope that God should assist them, while they offer to trust him, which is his natural worship.* Seeing then God rejects the confidences which wicked men have in him, and blasteth every outward thing which they make their confidence, how is it possible for them to escape? When our rock will not save us, how shall we be saved by a staff of reed?

The

The third branch of the text wrings the very dregs of the wrath of God, into the cup of ungodly men.

Spes eorum.
וְכֵן יִהְיֶה

Their hope shall be as the giving up of the ghost.

When hope dies all dies: hope is the last commodity which a man puts off in this life; but what is their hope worth which is as dead.

*Proprie hac
phraſi ſignifica-
tur deliquium
anima.*

*Eſt ſpes illo-
rum abomina-
tio animæ.*
אין.

There is much variety in interpreting this expreſſion. The word properly taken ſignifies *swooning*, or failing of the ſpirits. The giving up of the ghost, is the total and final failing of the ſpirits. He can have but few ſpirits left alive, whoſe hope hath given up the ghost. Mr. Broughton renders, *Their hope is nought but pangs of the ſoul*: the Vulgar, *their hope ſhall be the abomination of their ſoul*: The ſenſe of which tranſlation ſeems to be this; That which wicked men receive in lieu of, or in answer to their great hopes, ſhall be an abomination to them; they hope for good, but evil cometh. And every evil is then moſt grievous, when it ſucceeds the hope of good. Hope may be ſaid to give up the ghost, when either the good we would obtain removes further from us, or the evil we would decline comes cloſer to us: Hope expires when we are preſented with viſions of fear and ſorrow, after our higheſt expectations of joy and comfort: hence ſome tranſlate the word (*Nepheſh*) *a breath or puff of winds*, to which the hope of the wicked is elegantly compared, becauſe it quickly vaniſheth and produceth no effect, or not the effect hoped for. That complaint in the Prophet, ſures this notion fully, (*Iſa 26. 18.*) *We have been with childe* (bigge with hopes) *we have been in pain*, (endured much to enjoy our hopes and bring them to the birth, but in ſtead of them) *we have as it were brought forth winde*, *we have not wrought any deliverance in the earth*. After long looking, and long labour, all proved but a gripe of winde or a collick fit.

*Vox Nepheſh
hac loco pro ha-
litu & vento
ſumitur. Bold.*

Again, ſay others, *Their hope ſhall be as the ſnuffing of the breath*, that is, they ſhall be ſo angry at their diſappointments, that they ſhall vex & ſnuff at it. Or thus, The things which they ſhall receive upon all their hopes placed in & credit given to the creature, ſhall not be worth a *ſnuff of breath*; that is, they ſhall be light and vain. So ſome expound that (*Mal. 1. 13.*) where the Prophet brings in that people toying under the preſſures of (that which ſhould have been their delight) the publike worſhip: *ye have ſaid, Behold*

*res ſperate
dignæ ſunt
que exhiben-
tur exiſſen-
tur quas ſtatu
repellat longe-
que projiciat.*

what

What a wearinesse is it, and ye have snuffed at it; (It is this word) they cried out, we have brought many weighty offerings and sacrifices, and what a burthen is it to do so? and ye snuffed at it, that is, ye thought much of it, or were vexed at it, so we translate: But the letter of the original is read thus, *ye have said, Behold what a wearinesse is it, where as you might have blown it away, or blown it off*; as if he had said, you think you have done a great matter, and speak as if ye were all in a sweat at my service, whereas indeed you have done little for me, and what you did, you spoiled it in the doing, you have done it in an ill manner; you have brought me a poor, a lame and a halting sacrifice, such as a man might even blow away with his breath, and your own hearts have been more halting, lame and light then your sacrifice. So here, their hope shall be as a thing blown or puffed away with a breath, there shall be no stability, no subsistence in it.

The words (according to our reading) teach us, that the hopes of wicked men are decaying and dying hopes. *Giving up the ghost* is the last act of life, and the beginning of death. *perditio Sept.* As all the hopes of wicked men perish when they die, so while they live their hopes are dying. A godly man hath not only a living but a lively hope, (1 Pet. 1.3.) A wicked man hath but a dying hope at best, and his hope shall be worse and worse every day till it be utterly desperate. The Prophet Joel describeth the judgements of God upon his antient people by pulling off the bark of a tree, (chap. 1.7.) *He hath laid my vine wast, and barked my figt-ree; He hath made it clean bare, the branches of it are white.* The Chaldee paraphrast glosses it by the expression of this text, *He hath caused my figt-ree to give up the ghost*; hence the meaning is plain, that, look as a tree (take it for a figt-ree, or any other tree) when you pull off the bark, bears no more fruit, but dies, so shall the hope of a wicked man be: We may say of such a mans hope as Christ of the figt-ree which he cursed, *never fruit grow on thee more*, thou art a dying tree, thou hast done thy worst, thou hast seen thy best daies, now thy bark is peeled off, thy boughes are bare, thy hope is as the giving up of the ghost.

Lastly, The Hebrew, having no particle of similitude, runs thus in the letter, *Their hope shall be the giving up of the ghost, that is, A wicked man is often brought into such a condition that he hath no hope but this, that his day is almost done, and himself a neer neighbour*

Spes eorum eff-
ratio anima
i.e. tanto dolore
afficiuntur ex-
cidenter sua
de us sibi mor-
tem conscifi-
cant,
bour

bour unto death : He hath no hope when he dies , yet all his hope is to die , and that's a miserable hope. *Jonah's* hope (under temptation) was the giving up of the ghost , therefore he praies hard that God would take him out of the world. *Achisophels* hope was his death , he being crossed in his wicked counsel went and hanged himself. They who are past all positive hope in this life , retire (as their last reserve) to this privative hope , O that they were dead *Not to be , is their hope who are overpressed with fears of being miserable.* Despair of all good while we live , makes evil (such is death) the best of our hopes.

The summe of all is , *A wicked man is a miserable man.* Put the three parts of this verse together , and you may read the worst of misery. *He that never receives the good he hopes for , and sees others receive that good which he grieves for : He that cannot escape any danger which he fears , nor meet with any deliverance which he desires : He whose hopes are dying , or who hath no hope but to dye , he that is all this , is any thing but happy , and wants nothing but hell (at the very brink whereof he is , when he is all this) to make him compleatly miserable.*

The Prophet *Malachi* gives us the opinion of those times concerning wicked men , *You call the proud happy , and they that work wickednesse are set up ;* but he tells of a time when they should return and discern between the righteous and the wicked ; There is the greatest real difference already between the righteous and the wicked , but God will make a legible difference , a difference so plain and legible , that you shall not need to call in the help of faith (which hath the most exquisite eye) to read it , sense may do it. The oldest eyes , even the eyes of the old man shall discern between the righteous and the wicked , between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not , when the one shall be burnt up root and branch in the fire and flames of justice , and the other refreshed with the healing beams of the Son of righteousness. Wayt but a while and you shall see God drawing out these positions in providences towards his people , and making a visible comment upon this text of Scripture. The light of the righteous shall not fail , but the eyes of the wicked shall ; The one shall be secure because there is hope , but the other hath no hope to escape , or the hope he hath shall be as the giving up of the ghost.

JOB Chap. 12. verſ. 1, 2, 3, 4.

*And Job answered, and ſaid,
No doubt but ye are the people, and wiſdom ſhall die with you.
But I have underſtanding as well as you, I am not inferiour to
you: yea, who knoweth not ſuch things as theſe?
I am as one mocked of his neighbour, who calleth upon God,
and he answereth him: the juſt upright man is laughed
to ſcorn.*

THis and the two following Chapters, contain *Jobs* answer to the council and objections of his third friend, *Zophar*, not excluding what had been ſaid by the two former. There are four things moſt remarkable in it.

First, *Job* ſharply rebukes that pride of ſpirit, and confidence of their own opinion which he obſerved in his friends. He purſues this point from the beginning of the Chapter to the end of the fourth verſe. *No doubt but ye are the people, &c.*

Secondly, He refutes that opinion which they three had maintained againſt him; namely, *that good or evil things diſtinguiſh good and evil men*; himſelf ſhewing by many arguments taken from the various adminiſtrations of God, that outward evils are often the lot of good men, and that outward good is often the lot of evil men in this life. This Theam begins at the fifth verſe, and is enlarged to the end of the Chapter.

Thirdly, He rejects his friends, *as Phyſicians of no value*, yea, as having wronged God whiſt they ſeemed to be advocates for him. This he proſecutes with much variety from the beginning of the thirteenth Chapter to the ſeventeenth verſe.

Fourthly, He renews his former plea with God, putting many requests to him, and ſtrongly arguing for a releaſe from, or at leaſt a leſſening and mitigation of his troubles.

The whole diſcourſe is ſomewhat more preſſing and ſharp,

then either of the former ; *Job's* ſtile taſts much of the gall and vinegar of his ſorrows in this reply : and there was ſome reaſon it ſhould : for ſeeing his friends ſtill undervaluing the defence he had made, and charging him afreſh with that old leaven of hypocrifiſe (as if there were no way to aſſert the juſtice and holineſſe of God, but by condemning him for unjuſt and unholy) he could not take it well at their hands, but grows ſomewhat warm in language towards them ; we ſhall be ſenſible of it, in opening the body of his answer.

Then Job answered and ſaid.

He ſeems to aſſert rather than to diſpute, and is larger in laying down his own poſitions, then in answering the objections of his friends. Yet indeed a clear aſſertion of truth is a ſufficient confutation of error ; and a clear ſtating of a queſtion is the real answer of all objections.

No doubt but ye are the people.

The word is uſually tranſlated, *the multitude* ; and it comes from a root which ſignifies to *cover* or *hide*, becauſe a multitude, or a great croud of people, hide and cover the face of the earth.

עַם אֲנִי *Opertur, texit, quia multitudo terram tegit.* *No doubt but ye are the people :* The text is taken two waies : Some read it as a plain aſſertion, others, as an irony, which is a ſpeech filled with deriſion : while the letter of it makes no doubt, the ſpirit of it is an abſolute denial.

They who take it as a plain aſſertion, read thus ; *Without all queſtion you are to be reckoned (inter plebem) but as the ordinary ſort of people, even as the vulgar, and wiſdom is dead with you ; if ever your had any wiſdom your wiſdom is faded, your parts are ſpoiled, you have outlived your prime ; you are not the men you pretend to be, the choiceſt and the chiefeſt, the cream and flower of all ; no, your ſpeech betrays you, and ſaith you are of the people, of vulgar judgements and common underſtandings. I ſee no depth or myſterie in any thing ye have ſpoken. Thus the Pharifees ſpeak, Have any of the rulers believed on him ? but this people (this common people, this vulgar) who knoweth not the law, are curſed,*

עַם אֲנִי *Populus id eſt מְכֻרָּהּ* *Job. 7. 49.*

Secondly, By *the people*, ſome of the Rabbins underſtand the choiceſt, the elect of the people, ſo the language is ironical.

עַם אֲנִי *dele-* *No doubt but ye are the people, the choiſe, the choſen people : the choſe*

Rab. Moſ. ben Nahman.

chosen of God; his elect and precious ones; his favorites and familiars, to whom he opens his bosome, and reveals his secrets; ye are the Church and people of God; to whom the divine Oracles are committed. We are thrust out among the prophane.

*Vos estis electi
simi in toto
populo ac velut
columna totius
nationis, Merc.*

Again, Ye are the people, that is, the chosen of the people, the representative of the whole nation; as we may say of the House of Commons in Parliament, Ye are the people of England, that is, the people have chosen you, and confide in you, as the wisest, the most judicious and faithfull of your severall countries, for the carrying on of the affairs of the Kingdom, and the maintaining of their proper rights. In this sense (though they are but a few hundreds, yer) they are *the people of the Kingdom*. Job taxeth his friends as arrogating this, „ Ye are the people, ye are they that would seem „ to be a whole nation of men, ye (sure) have got away all the wit „ from the world, ye would be accounted as man-kind; or as the „ flower of the universe, ye take it upon you as if all the world „ were epitomized in you three, as if all wise, learned and knowing „ men had delivered up and put over their judgements and under- „ standings, their all, into your hands; yea as if wisdom had yeel- „ ded her self captive to you, and ye had devoured all knowledge, Surely ye are the man. „ The Lord by the Prophet *Jeremy*

*Vos estis homi-
num universi-
tas, Tygur.
Amicos modo-
desti reprehen-
dit asperso ta-
men medico si-
vo sale sine fel-
le sub ironiam
forma, Sanct.*

(Chap. 1. bids then run to and fro through the streets of Jerusalem, to see if they could finde a man: And the old Cynick went into a throning with a torch by day, to finde a man. *A man of wisdom and integrity is The man, other men compared to him are but beasts.* Zophar at the twelfth verse of the former chpater, compares Job to the wilde asses colts; and numbers him among the beasts; here Job fits him with an expression; you carry your selves (saith he) as if you only were *The men*, and I, yea all men besides, *very beasts* or wilde asses colts, that knew neither what ye say, nor whereof ye affirm.

*Quoniam Zo-
phar Jobum
velut canem, put-
abat, i. e.
stupidissimo
bruto compara-
verat, ideo di-
cit, vos estis ho-
mines, ceteri
ad vos bestia,
Merc.*

And wisdom shall die with you.

Moral wisdom is the knowledge of natural things and of their causes. Divine wisdom is the true knowledge of God and of our selves. We may suppose both wisdoms intended here. As if he had said, you pretend to so much wisdom, that if you should die, all that's called wisdom must surely die with you, there will be none ('tis to be feared) left in the world when you leave the world. When the Sun goes down, the light goes down, the

*Sapientia off-
rerum divina-
rum et huma-
narum, causa-
bitur, quia
cum res conti-
nentur scien-
tia. Cicet. l. 2
de off.*

Sun is the vessel of light ; it was said of *Chrysostom* (who held forth much light of knowledge in his time) *that it were better the Sun should be taken out of the firmament, than he from his Sphere.* When some men go down, much light goes down with them : *A wise holy man is both a burning and a shining light.* Job puts it upon his friends as their presumption, to think so highly of themselves : His thoughts were, that wisdom would be safe when they should not be, that the common-wealth of learning would lose little or nothing, though it lost them, with all their learning ; that the day of knowledge would not be darker whensoever they with all their light should set.

Quando mortemini integra manebit quæ in mundo est sapientia. Bold.

Whether or no *Job's* friends were thus conceited of their own abilities, and preferred themselves before their brethren, is more than I dare conclude against them. Their round dealing with *Job*, and those magisterial lessons and advices given him sound, somewhat that way : But let it be granted that *Job* in his passion over-acted a little upon his friends, yet there is this truth in it, which shall be my first Observation from these words : That.

Many are apt to over-value and over-rate their own abilities, as if they had engrossed all knowledge, and had the monopoly of wisdom in their own breasts, as if all must borrow or buy of their store, and light their candle at their torch.

Wisdom is no mans peculiar ; and a great opinion of our own wisdom, favours of great folly. The very head of that monster *papal pride*, appears in this point. The Pope thinks himself to be *The man, that, He is The people*, that all the wisdom and judgement of the world is contracted into him, and fastned to the pummels of his chair ; whence he would be beleaved to utter oracles with a spirit of infallibility. *No man errs more than he who saith he cannot.* Nor is any man a greater stranger to true knowledge, then he who boasts he hath more than his neighbours. It is noted of the inhabitants of *China*, that as they are a wily nation, so they have a conceit of their own wit above all the nations of the earth. Hence their boast, *that they have two eyes, the Europeans one, and the rest of the world is blinde.* But they who think all are blinde who see not with their eyes, are yet blinde and have never seen themselves. It is the emptiness of knowledge, not a fulness of it, which makes so great a sound. They who expect that all should bow to their judgements, and acquiesce

quiesse in what they resolve; They, who would be esteemed to speak nothing but principles and *possulara*, which must be swallowed, without chewing, by an implicit faith; They, who require assent, rather than perswade it, may justly fall under the weight, and feel the smart of this scornfull objugation, *ye are the men, and wisdom shall die with you.* The Apostle is expresse, *He that thinks* (that is, proudly conceits) *he knoweth any thing; he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know* 1 Cor. 8. 2. what then, doth he know, who thinks (which he cannot without highest pride) that he knoweth all things; and that all men must know (if they will know any thing) from him?

Secondly Observe,

All kinde of scorn, is not alwaies uncomely.

We may without breach of charity, or stain of holiness, check pride with derision, and speak them below men, who speak themselves above men, or act what is unworthy of men. The Jews are taught by God himself to deride the proud King of Babylon, Isa. 14. 4. *Thou shalt take up this proverb (or taunting speech) against the King of Babylon, and say, How hath the oppressour ceased, the golden city ceased!* Sec. vers. 9, 10. *Hell from beneath is moved for thee to meet thee at thy coming; it stirreth up the dead for thee; even all the chief ones of the earth: it hath raised up from their thrones all the Kings of the nations; All they shall speak unto thee and say, Art thou also become weak as we? art thou also become as one of us?* This is the proverb which was to be taken up against the King of Babylon, and it is a taunting proverb indeed. Not only should the great Princes then alive (who vers. 8.) are expressed under the shadow of *sirre trees* and the *cedars of Libanon*, rejoice against him: but even the dead whom he had oppressed are here brought in, insulting over him. When the Babylonian should tumble down to hell, the Princes there are represented rising from their places to give this great Prince the upper hand and the highest room in that kingdom of darknes. Thus hell it self is said to be moved, and to be as it were in a hurry, how to entertain that mighty King, that he who had been chief in wickedness and in pride, might have this right, to be chief in torment. The dialogue which the dead are said to have with that deceased King, is somewhat like those in which *Alexander* and others are decided by the dead in *Lucian*; *Art thou become like to us?* Sec. In what a heat of heavenly zeal doth Eliab

deride the priests of Baal, 1 King 18. 27. Cry aloud, for he is a god, either he is talking, or he is pursuing, or he is in a journey, or peradventure he sleepeth and must be awaked. When the Prophet *Micaiah* (1 King 22. 17.) was called for to give his opinion about *Ahabs* expedition to *Ramoth Gilead*, he knew what they would have him vote (they expected he should join with the rest, and say what they had said) and therefore when *Ahab* asked, shall we go up to *Ramoth Gilead*? yea, saith he, go up and prosper. I know you have a minde to go up, I pray go; *Ahab* relented it as a scorn, and therefore adds, How oft shall I adjure thee that thou tell me nothing but that which is true in the Name of the Lord? They who resolve upon their way, before they ask counsell, are often counsel'd according to their own way; and are led to error in scorn, because they had no love unto the truth. We finde the Apostle *Paul* in the highest elevation of his spirit, expressing himself in language extremely parallell with this of *Job*. It seems the *Corinthians* much like the *Laodiceans*, had boasted of their spirituall fullnesse, that they were rich, and encreased with goods, and had need of nothing. Yea, saith the

Ridet spiritus carnalis, ridet caro spiritualis.

Descendit ad gravissimam ironiam ut ambiciosos illos ad ruborem vel invidiam cogat.

Bez. in loc.

Postquam stridit & absque figuris vanam eorum confidentiam repressit, nunc ironice quoque eam deridet. Calvin.

Hec antithesis tota est ironica & plena oculis. Bez.

Apostle, I know ye are, I will be of your opinion too for once, (1 Cor. 4. 8.) Now ye are full, now ye are rich, (all things go bravely with you) ye have reigned as Kings without us, that is, you exalt your selves above us here, as much as a King is above his own subjects, you are supream. I and *Apollos*, whose Ministry God was pleased to use in planting and watering the Gospel among you, are now looked upon as mean fellows, as men of low and poor parts, or at best but as some good honest dull Preachers, not worthy to be named the same day with your new and high-flown teachers (all this is but an holy scorn put upon them, as his correction in the next line imports) I would to God (saith he) that ye did reign (namely in deed and in truth, I shall not envy you, only I would be bold to put in for a part with you) I would to God ye did reign, that we also might reign with you, I would be glad to share in those gallant Gospel notions you so much brag of: but I fear your portion is but small in true spirituall Gospel knowledge, except in your own conceits, and there you abound sufficiently. Again in the 10th vers. though in another stile, yet fully to the sense, and almost the words of *Job*; We are fools for Christs sake, but ye are wise in Christ, we are weak, but ye are strong, ye are honourable but

we are despised, we are nothing, ye are all: This the Apostle speaks, as most interpreters agree, by an irony; or if taken properly, the sence may be given thus, we are fools in the opinion of the world, possibly in yours too, because for the Gospels sake we expose our selves to so much hazzard, *But ye are wise,* who so preach Christ, that ye endanger neither life nor liberty, neither persons nor estates. Read the same strain (1 Cor. 14, *gatio me soli, 36, 37.*) *What? came the word of God out from you? or came it sapere Corin- thii sibi videam- tur.* Bez. *Obiurgatio est paulo asperior sed quæ necesse spiritali, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord:* as if he had said, *Doe not think you have got all, I have somewhat as well as you, I know what the commandment, what the will of God is.* Job speaks in the next verse as if he had read this Epistle of Paul, or had set him a pattern, for having said, *No doubt ye are the people, and wisdom shall dye with you,* He adds,

Verse 3. *But I have understanding as well as you; I am not inferior to you, yea, who knows not such things as these?*

As before he derided their ignorance, or their presumption of knowledge, so now he puts himself into the ballance with them; you that think you have all the wisdom and knowledge, let me come in for a share with you, *I have understanding as well as you, I am not inferior to you,* possibly I shall weigh as heavy as you when we are weighed together, yea, who doth not weigh as heavy as you? *who knows not such things as these?*

We have here a double comparifon.

First, Job compares himself with his friends, and that two wayes. 1. For the matter, That as they had understanding, so had he, *I have understanding as well as you:* 2. He compares himself for the degree, My understanding is as large and weighty as yours, *I am not inferior to you.*

Secondly, He makes a comparifon between his friends and the rest of men, even with the vulgar and ordinary sort of men, as if he had said, *Do not think that I lift my self up above my brethren*

thren or would be reckoned for more than an ordinary man, when I say, *I have understanding as well as you*, for truly who knows not such things as these? yours is but the common Ephah, and your measure but the measure of a man.

I have understanding as well as you.

*Non sum ex-
celsus neque cor
perdidit.*

The Hebrew is, *I have a heart as well as you*. The heart in Scripture is put, as for the affections, so likewise for the understanding: a man without understanding is a man without an heart: the heart is the treasury wherein the precepts and maxims of holy knowledge are laid up; *A good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth good things. Hear now this. O foolish people, and without understanding*, the Hebrew is, *and without heart*, Jer. 5. 21. And in the 34th of this book of Job, vers. 32. *Let men of understanding tell me*, the Originall is, *Let men of heart tell me*: And the Latines call a wise man (*Cor. daum*) a hearty piece, a man of heart. The name of one of the twelve Apostles was Lebbeus (from *leb* the heart) signifying as much as wise or understanding. Some, for, *I have understanding*, ready, *I have courage and height of spirit*, as well as you; The heart in Scripture is often put for courage, 2 Sam. 17. 10. *He that is a valiant man, whose heart is as the heart of a lion, shall utterly melt*, that is, his courage shall fail. So the Prophet threatens that *the mighty mens hearts in Moab in that day shall be as the heart of a woman in her pangs*, Jer. 48. 41. The failing of the heart is the failing of courage: that's a good sense here, *I have courage as well as you*, or *I have spirit to stand to my cause and maintain what I have asserted*, notwithstanding all the contempt and contradictions which you have poured upon me; you have not yet made my heart fall, though my body, though my estate be cast down. You have loaded me with reproaches and heavy censures, but my spirit bears your infirmity in doing so.

לֹא

I am not inferiour to you.

*Non cede-
d
vobis, culpa
vobis Hebrais-
mus est, quo
cadere signifi-
cat abjectum
esse & inferio-
rem.*

I have the same for kinde, and I have as much of it as you. The Hebrew is very elegant, *I do not fall before you*, a man that falls before another, is subdued and overcome. He that fails under in wrestling, is prevailed over: *I do not fall as the weaker*, I yet keep my ground and stand upon my legs. So the word

is used, *Nehem. 6. 16.* When those enemies perceived how God dealt with his people, the text saith, *they were cast down in their own eyes*, or, fell before their own eyes, that is, they were ashamed and dejected because they saw the prosperity of the Jews.

There may be a threefold sense of this, *I am not inferiour to you*, or, *I do not fall before you.*

First, I am not inferiour to you in honour and dignity, *I am as great a man as you.*

Secondly, It may refer to his holinesse, I am not inferiour to you in grace, *I am as good a man as you.*

Thirdly, Which is specially meant, I am not inferiour to you in knowledge and understanding, *I am as wise a man as you.* Some render it thus, *I yet fall, trip, or stumble no more then you, and I hope to stand my ground in this controversie as long as you dare stand against me.*

Hence Observe,

First, *That in some cases, self-commendation is not uncomely.*

To boast of our understanding proceeds from the want of it: but a man may say, *I have understanding as well as you*, without a boast. This is a very tender point: example from the servants of God in Scripture, teacheth us to be more ready to speak and write our blots and failings, then our good works or praises; And the rule of Scripture is, *Let another man praise thee and not thine own mouth; a stranger, and not thine own lips, (Prov. 27. 2.)* The Apostle also is expresse, that self-commendation is no commendation. (2 Cor. 10. 18.) *Not he that commendeth himself is approved, but whom the Lord commendeth.* To have praise of other men, is better then to have praise of our selves, but to have praise of God is better then to have praise of men: Yet when men dispraise us maliciously, we may justly praise our selves. Such praise is but to doe our selves justice, which we are more bound to doe, then to any other man.

There is a twofold commendation of our selves, There is a sinfull self-commendation, when we desire to be lifted up in the opinion of the world: There is a lawfull self-commendation, when we desire to be lifted up, lest the glory God should be cast down. When the honour of God is in danger to be abated in our abatings, we may safely take all due honour to our selves: yea we are bound to honour and make the most (we possibly can) of our selves with truth, when either the truth or honour of

Christ must be lessened, if we doe not. *I think* (saith Paul) *that I have the spirit of God*, (1 Cor. 7. 10.) he speaks not as if he doubted whether he had, but to reprove those who slighted him as if he had not the spirit of God. While he saith only, *I think I have the spirit of God*, he saith more to his purpose, then if he had asserted strongly, *I have the spirit of God*. The confidence of the false Apostles, that they had the spirit, gave occasion not only to suspect whether they had it, but to conclude, that they had it not: *Pauls* modesty in but thinking, gave occasion to be resolute in concluding that he had the spirit.

Further, *Job* doth not only commend himself positively, and say, *I have understanding, I have wisdom*, but he commends himself comparatively, which is, the most displeasing way of commendation. We use to say, *comparisons are odious*, and subject to misconstruction: Yet *Job* commends himself, at least by comparing himself with, if not by preferring himself before the foremost of his friends, *I am not inferior to you*.

Hence Observe,

A man in some cases may so stand upon his own honour, as not to yeeld or submit to others at all.

The Apostles counsell is, in lowlinesse of minde, let each esteeme other better then themselves, (Phil. 2. 3.) and yet a time may come when a man with lowlinesse of minde enough may judge himself better then another: When the matter lies between Saints and Saints (of such the Apostle there speaks) one Saint should not lift up himself above another, they should rather give honour to one another, and think others better then themselves: *If any man hath wherein to boast, I much more* (saith Paul, Phil. 3. 4.) yet he calls himself *lesse then the least of all Saints*; amongst Saints he cares not though he were accounted the least of Saints; But when his Ministry and Apostleship was under-rated, he speaks of himself at the highest rate, 2 Cor. 11. 5. *I suppose I was not a whit behind the very chiefeest Apostles*, fully the language of *Job* here, *I am not inferiour to you*, no nor to the best of you. But were some of the Apostles greater and better then others? was there inferiority and superiority amongst them? No, Apostleship as an office is of equall honour in all Apostles; but even amongst Apostles some had more excellent gifts and greater enlargements, God did communicate himself more to one then to another, one of those starres differed from another starre in glory.

glory : Thus among Apostles some one might be chief ; Thus Paul was not behinde (which I take for a modest expression, that he was *even with*, yea that he, in some things, *went before or outwent*) the chiefest of the Apostles. He indeed confesseth at the 12th chapter of the same Epistle, *vers. 11, 12. I am become a fool in glorying* ; as if he had said, it is the guise and character of a fool, affectedly to commend himself, but (I have not affected it) *ye have compelled me to it, for I ought to have been commended by you* (that is, ye ought to have given testimony to my integrity, and to have maintained the honour of my Ministry) *for in nothing am I behinde the very chiefest Apostles, though I be nothing* ; though you through envy account me nothing, and though I in humility would account my self nothing, yet (being now put to it) I must speak it out, *I am not behind the very chiefest Apostles*, or as some render from the letter of the Greek ; *I want nothing (not a hairs breadth) of their measure, who are Apostles above measure, I am as much an Apostle as they who are more then much* τὸς ὕπερ λ' αὐτῶν ἀποστόλων. *Apostles.* All this while Paul was no Braggadochio, no vain Thraso. He doth not contend personally with the Apostles for preheminance or primacy, but he checks those who hoped to be excused in undervaluing him, because they valued other Apostles above him, or pretended to have received Gospel mysteries from some other of the Apostles (whose great confidants and familiars they would be esteemed) beyond all that Paul had ever yet taught. Paul (I say) never wrangled with any of the Apostles for the upperhand, he never said to Matthew, Thomas or Andrew, &c. *I am not behind you, or, I am a better man then thou* : But because they made use of the parts and gifts of some of the Apostles to slight his, he who some where saith, *I am not worthy to be called an Apostle*, saith here, *I am not behind the greatest, the chiefest of the Apostles.* Thus we may stand upon terms of credit with any who lay our persons low, that they may disparage our work, and lay that service low to which God hath called us. Itis qui sunt super modum apostoli.

Solomon gives us an excellent observation (Prov. 25. 26.) *A righteous man falling down before the wicked, is as a troubled fountain and a corrupt spring.* Some enterpret it thus, A righteous man falling into sin, before, that is, in the company or presence of the wicked, *is as a corrupt spring*, many begin to suspect that his waters are not wholesome, when they see such corrup-

tion swimming at the top, and so refuse to drink him any more, *ſc.* to accept his counſels or inſtructions. This is a uſeſull explication; yet I rather give the ſence from the point in hand; *A righteous man falling*, that is, baſely ſubmitting, or creeping poorly to a wicked man, *is as a troubled fountain*. Many a righteous man is made to fall down before the wicked, *Abel* tell down before *Cain*, for he murdered him, and ſo have thouſands of righteous ſouls fallen before their bloody perſecutors: but for a righteous man actively to fall down, to crouch or ſtoop to wicked ones, either through fear or flattery, is an aſt unworthy a righteous man. A righteous man thus falling before the wicked, what is he? or to what ſhall we liken him? *Solomon* tell us, *he is as a troubled fountain, and a corrupt ſpring*. A righteous man is a wholeſome fountain, a ſpring of pure water, many may reſreſh themſelves at him: but he by this his fooliſh aſt, becomes a troubled fountain, he hath mudded the purity of his own ſoul, with worldly reſpects and carnall intereſts, elſe he had never bowed to that generation of golden Idols, and graven Images, Noble *Mordecai* would not fall before proud *Haman*. He choſe rather (if that muſt have been the iſſue of it) to fall down by his power, then to fall down unto his perſon. Giants are called *Nephelim*, from this word, *Fallers*, becauſe men beholding their vaſt limbs and dreadful ſtature (like the Army of *Israel* before great *Goliath*) fall before them for fear. There are Giants ſtill in every land (though not in body, ſuch are very rare, yet in minde) they would be *Nephelim*, all muſt fall before, and ſubmit unto them; they would be *Joſeph*s, every mans ſheaf muſt make obeiſance unto theirs. *Paul* would never fall down to *faſe Apoſtles*, nay he would not to a true Apoſtle, when he did not walk according to the truth, *he withſtood Peter to the face, becauſe he was to be blamed*, Gal. 2. 11, 14. Though Chriſtians ought in lowlineſſe to ſubmit one to another, and in duty to ſubmit to Magiſtracy, and the higher powers, yet they muſt not ſubmit to the pride or luſt of any how high ſoever. Thus to bow before wicked men, is ſomewhat like bowing to an Idol. *To adore them is to diſhonour God, yea to make them Gods.*

Who knows not ſuch things as theſe?

*Heb. cum quo
mon ſunt hec.*

As he had ballanced himſelf with his friends, ſo he thought any man might. Such a treaſure of knowledge as this, is no mans peculiar:

peculiar: We may gather up such upon the common, we need not travel to the oracles of learning for it; he that knows any thing knows what you say; He that is not (such as you think me to be) *a wild asses cole*, a very fool, may fathom all your notions; they carry no such depth but that line enough may be had in any mans brain to reach their bottom, *Who knows not such things as these?* Note from it,

First, *There are some common principles and easie truths, which fall under every mans apprehension.*

Who knows not such things as these? The Apostle (*Heb. 6. 1.*) speaks of the first principles of the doctrine of Christ. The objects of knowledge are of various degrees, according to the degrees of capacity in the subject. (*Heb. 5. 14.*) we read of *strong meat for men of full age, and milk for babes.* The youngest childe feeds on milk. Who knows not such things as these? Some principles in Religion are of so easie a digestion, that even babes in Christ may feed upon them and suck them in. We say of those commodities which are rich and high prized, *they are not every mans money*; so we may say of those truths which are dark and mysterious, *they are not for every understanding*: He that hath an understanding, may understand so much of the mystery of Christ as may light him safe to heaven; though some things are too high for those who are highest to understand fully, while they are here upon the earth.

Secondly Observe, *Who knows not such things as these?*

It is a shame not to be acquainted with common principles.

Every one knows these things; what? not understand that which the meanest may understand? We finde the Apostle improving this argument, *Rom. 2. 4.* Where (having convinced the Gentiles in the former Chapter for sinning against the light of nature and the benefits of creation) he proceeds to convince the Jews for sinning against the light of Scripture, and the mercies of redemption. *Despisest thou the riches of the goodnesse and forbearance of God, &c. Not knowing that the goodnesse of God leadeth thee to repentance?* Art thou a Jew, one that boastest of so much knowledge, and dost not thou know this common principle? dost not thou know the meaning of the goodnesse and forbearance of God? every childe in holy knowledge knows the voice of mercy, that it bespeaks our return to God, or leads us to repentance. The Apostle deals with the *Corinthians* upon

the same ground (1 Cor. 11. 14.) about the wearing of long hair, *Doth not nature it self teach you?* it is a shame for you to be ignorant of that which you may learn at the school and university of nature; nature teacheth, *that if a man have long hair, it is a shame unto him;* It is not only a sin, but a dishonour for a man, to do that, which his being a man tells him he should not doe. By a like insinuation Paul labours to keep the Ephesians at furthest distance from grosse sins; *for this ye know* (saith he) *that no whoremonger, &c. hath any inheritance in the kingdom of God and of Christ.* This is a received truth; do you not know this? I know ye know it. Some truths can hardly be known by all our study, many are known without any study. *It is almost as hard to be ignorant of some things, as it is to know other things.* There will be a sore reckoning with the world one day, because they are not seen in the deep mysteries of Christ, having been often shewed them; but when it shall be found that they are not seen in that, which they could not but see, except they had shut their eyes, this will render them altogether inexcusable, and shut their mouths for ever. *The more easie any truth is, the harder will be our suffering and the greater our sin, if we attain not to the knowledge of it.* Thirdly, *Jobs* friends carried it, as if their discourse had been all riddle and mysterie, yet he tells them, *Who knows not such things as these?*

Hence Note,

It is a vanity to pretend mysterionsse about vulgar truths.

Some cover the sun with clouds, and put disguises upon the plainest doctrines. They dig deep for that which lies above ground; and in stead of enlightning what is dark, darken the clearest light. They speak and write of things as new and never known, when as all that hear or read them may justly reprove them with that ancient Proverb, *You tell us news,* or in the language of this text, *who knows not such things as these?*

Job having thus rebuked the pride of his friends, begins to check their scorn,

Verse 4. *I am as one mocked of his neighbour, who calleth upon God, and he heareth him; the just upright man is laughed to scorn.*

I am as one mocked of his neighbour.

The word signifies scorning joined with laughter, strictly called

led derision. The letter of the Hebrew is, *I am the laughter* (the sport or pastime) *of my neighbour*; he speaks partly in the first, and partly in the third person: He doth not say, *I am as one mocked of my neighbour*, that had cast it too directly upon his friends, but, *I am as one that is mocked of his neighbour*, and so lets it light where it will. *Jobs* comforters had high thoughts of themselves, and low thoughts of him: A man that is mocked, is under the greatest contempt, and meanest estimation. *I am as one mocked, &c.* as if *Job* had said, *In stead of comforting, informing and supporting me, you have mocked me in my adversity.*

Observe, *It is an addition to affliction, to be mocked in affliction.*

Mocking is one of the greatest afflictions; amongst the sufferings and cruel persecutions that the Saints endured, the Apostle mentions this, *They had tryall of cruel mockings* (Heb. 11. 36.) *Who knows how deep sharp words will enter, and what wounds they will make?* They not only wound the name, but the spirit, they stab to the heart. It was one great part of the sufferings of Christ, he was mocked and used like a fool in a play, they put a robe on his back, a reed in his hand, and a crown upon his head; and when he hung on the crosse finishing the work of our salvation, they (in highest scorn) *bid him save himself.* The Apostle Jude assures us that the Lord is coming to execute judgement upon all and to convince all that are ungodly of all their hard speeches which they have spoken, *Hard speeches are as bad as hard blows, and amongst all hard speeches mockings are the hardest.* A man will easier receive a blow from his friend, then a scorn from his friend: Scorning is fundamentally opposite to the fundamental laws of love. This is the second ingredient which embittered his sufferings, *I am as one that is mocked of his neighbour.*

Secondly Note, *The nearer they are from whom we receive discourtesies, the nearer they go to our hearts.*

A wound from a hand afar off, is far off from our hearts. What? Thou my friend, Thou my familiar use me thus? The mock of a neighbour is cutting, almost killing. The unkindenes of a friend hath most of the enemie in it. When Christ perceived his own Disciples withdrawing, he was extremely troubled at it. Many of the people were offended and went back, and walked no more with him, and he complained not, he expected no better

Ab amicis accepta contumelia aculeum habens molestissimum;

from

from them : but when he saw his Disciples hang a little off, he ex-
postulates, *Will ye also go away?* (Joh. 6. 67.) what, you my Disciples?
as if he had said, *that will be a crosse indeed, your departure will be a*
home-affliction; it is no wonder if others do it, but will ye do it?
will ye go away too? And because the sufferings of Christ, were
to be the highest in all aggravating circumstances, that they
might answer all the aggravations of our sins, therefore he was
wounded (as the Prophet speaks) in the house of his friends,
betrayed by his own Disciple, and by a Disciple kissing him.
Betrayest thou the Son of man with a kisse? (Luk. 22. 48.) Any trea-
son is bad enough, but the treason of a Disciple, and of a Disci-
ple kissing is worst of all. But as it behoved Christ to fulfill all
righteousnesse, so to receive all unkindnesse, and therefore this.
Though (as I have noted already) *Job* was not a type of Christ,
yet their sufferings were very like: Christ was wounded by the
lips, and *Job* by the tongue of a friend. I am as a man mocked
of his neighbour.

Who calleth upon God and he answereth him.

There is a difference among expositours about the antecedent
of this *Who*: whether it should be refer'd to *Job*, or to the
neighbour about whom *Job* speaks. I am as a man mocked of his
neighbour, who, which neighbour calls upon God and he answers
him. So some understand it, and then the words are a description
of *Jobs* neighbour, I am as a man that is mocked of his neighbour,
and what kinde of neighbour is he? he is one that useth to call
upon and to be heard of God; he is, a man acquainted with God
in prayer. The Hebrew word which we translate to call upon
God, notes a sort of men whose chief busines or trade was to call
upon or invocatè the Name of God. (Psal. 99. 6.) *Moses* and
Aaron among his Priests, and *Samuel* among them that call upon his
name, they called upon the Lord and he answered them; implying,
that it was their special calling to call upon God: So saith *Job*,
I am as one mocked of his neighbour; which neighbour is one that
calls upon God, that's his profession or his work; and 'tis as a
painfull so a most noble work. Prophets and Priests were pro-
fessed callers upon God, That interpretation of the word gives
the sense thus, I am derided by neighbours, who yet are such as
would be loth that God should deride them: they deride me whose
duty it is to pray for me, and to pray with me; you are men of prayer,
men

קָרָא

Dicitur cui ex
officio incum-
bit invocare
Deum Bold.

Siccine ludus
& fabula ero
etiam illis, qui
in Dei famula.
in socii mei
sunt ejusdem-
que consortes
ominiferis?
Bold.

men that call upon God, and you have the favour to be heard of God, God is facile and favourable unto you, but ye are hard and fowre to me; you shew me no favour; how uncomely a thing is this, that you who wait to be heard of God should not hear me? or that you who are heard of God should deride me? This exposition as it may stand with the letter of the Text, so it may teach us this lesson.

Ego tuisui sum
facio meo, qui
sc. facio, qui
tues deum in-
clamat cum ex-
audit: qui de-
um in omnibus
facilem habet.
Merc.

They who have had experience of Gods tenderness to help them and hear their prayers, should be very tender to others when they call to them and seek their help.

What? Should I be mocked of a neighbour that useth to call upon God? such carriage looks like theirs who call not upon God. You that have had answers from God in prayer, & know what it is to be answered, think what it is for you but to deny a friend, especially to mock a friend when he calls upon you in the day of his calamity. Will you take it well if God deny you, or send a mock in stead of an answer to your prayer? You that have any suit to God, be not hard, much less inexorable, when distressed friends sue unto you.

But the antecedent seems rather to be Job himself. I am as one mocked of his neighbour, who, that is, which man thus mocked, doth yet call upon God and he answers him: they mock him, but God doth not mock him. Or thus, I am as one that is mocked of his neighbour, who thereupon takes an advantage to call upon God, and go to God when he cannot be entertained, or is rejected by men, and he hears him. The vulgar translation reacheth this sense very clearly, He who is derided of his neighbour as I am, will call upon God, and God will hear him.

Qui deridetur
ab amico, sicut
ego, in vocabit
deum & exau-
diat eum. Vulg.
Et respondet illi
i. e. ut exaudi-
atur ab eo, e-
mollietur inter-
pretatio si &
sumatur pro ut.
Antehac cum
ad deum clama-
rem, me exaudi-
re solebat, sed
et nunc eum
idem facturum
non dispero, me
nunc qui rati-
sum vos mei
scitj ridetur?
Merc.

There is a difference in the latter clause, & he answereth him; we put it in the present tense, he answereth him; others in the preterperfect tense, he hath answered him; some in the future, he will answer him; he calleth upon God that he may answer him or to be answered by him: So Abraham speaks (Gen. 22. 8.) Intreat for me to Ephron that he may give me the cave of Machpelah. Thus here, he calls upon God, and he answereth him, that is, he calleth upon God that he may answer him, he hopeth to speed well in heaven with his petition, though he speed ill on earth.

Hence Observe. First, It is the privilege of the Saints when men fail and reject them, to make God their refuge, and their recourse to heaven.

A a

They

Ubi deest auxilium humanum, ibi maxime adest auxilium divinum. Aquin. in loc.

They who have interest in God, know how to make this improvement of it : If the world cast out the Saints, God will take them in : his stile is, *The helper of the friendless*. And Davids experience was, *When my Father and my Mother forsake me, the Lord taketh me up* (Psal. 27. 10.) that is, though my Father and Mother, who are neereſt to me, ſhould be ſo unnatural as to reſtrain their bowels, and forſake me ; or though they ſhould be reſtrained from doing me thoſe offices which nature dictates, yet the Lord takes me up, ſc. in the everlaſting arms of mercy: His love never changes, nor can any thing ſtop the motions of his love. His love is hotteſt to us when the love of man waxeth cold. The departures of friends bring him neerer to us, and where creature-comforts end, the comforts of God begin. *They are in a ſad condition, who being caſt off by men, have not a God to call upon, and go unto.* Only they who can have acceſſe to God, need not fear the receſſes of men.

Secondly, Obſerve,

That the repulſes which we meet with in the world, ſhould drive us nearer to God.

I (ſaith Job) am mocked of my neighbour, what courſe ſhall I take? ſhall I lye down and vex? ſhall I fret my ſelf and pine away? I know a better way than that: I will call upon God, I will try what's to be had in heaven, now that the earth hath nothing for me; men have not an ear for me, but ſure enough God hath not only an ear to hear, but a heart to pity, and a hand to work deliverance. The holy Prophet reſolves, It is good for me to draw nigh to God (Pſal. 73. 28.) And when he ſaith, 'tis good, his meaning is, 'tis beſt. This poſitive is ſuperlative. It is more than good for us to draw nigh to God at all times, it is beſt for us to do ſo; and it is at our utmoſt peril not to do ſo; for lo, (ſaith the Pſalme, ver. 27.) They that are farre from thee, ſhall periſh, thou ſhalt deſtroy them that go a whoring from thee. It is dangerous to be farre from God, but it is more dangerous to go farre from him. Every man is farre off by nature, and wicked men go further off: The former ſhall periſh, the latter ſhall be deſtroyed: He that fares beſt in his withdrawals from God, fares bad enough; Therefore it is beſt for us to draw nigh unto God. He is the beſt friend at all times, and the only friend at ſome times. And may we not ſay, that God ſuffers and orders evil times, and the withdrawals
of

of the creature for that very end, that we might draw neerer unto him? doth he not give up the world to a spirit of reviling and mocking, that he may stirre up in his people a spirit of praying? This is a gracious design of God, and we should interpret the neglects, the contempts and scorn of the world, to be as the voice of God saying to us, *Come to me and see whether you shall not have better usage*, see whether I will scorn you; you have loved the world too much, you have too much pleased your selves with the smiles and good looks of men; you have been taken & overtaken with the things of this life, come to me, and take (you cannot over-take) the things of eternal life. The least things of Heaven are more noble than the greatest things on earth. *Shall we not then prize the great things of Heaven much, when we can hardly enjoy the least things of the earth?* Shall we not when we are mocked of our neighbours call upon God, we having this assurance, that he will not mock, but answer us?

And he answereth him.

The answer which God makes to such as call upon him, is either to the outward or to the inward man: He answers the inward man, or the spirit of man, by a hint from his Spirit. Satisfaction to our spirits, is an answer from the Spirit. When the Lord (having said to the soul, *I am thy salvation*) saith also, *I am thine honour, I am thy credit, I am thy liberty, I am thy riches, I am thy friend*, the soul is more abundantly filled than with riches, credit, liberty, friends, or honour. Again, answer comes to the outward man, providence speaks to some as the spirit doth to others. We having called upon God, see the creature at work towards a redress of our evils, & a supply of our present wants. Under the Law God answered many waies: He answered by *Urim and by Thummim*, by *Prophets and by dreams*, by *visions and revelations*. And though we have not such answers now, yet we have as sure answers. God never receives any prayer which doth not receive an answer. We may call upon men and not be answered, men may go to Idols, to lying vanities, and not be answered; but if we go to God, we shall.

Hence Observe,

Prayer and seeking unto God are not in vain or fruitless.

The Lord will answer. Sometimes he answers before we call; and he gives before we ask; and he promiseth if we ask he will

A a 2

give,

give, and answer if we call. Christ raiseth up our confidence that God will hear us, because men doe. (*Mat. 7. 9. 10.*) *What man (saith he) is there of you, whom if his Son ask bread, will he give him a stone? or if he ask a fish, will he give him a Serpent?* Christ argues from that readiness which is in men (especially in those who are in relation to us) to give, that God will give much more. *If ye then being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your Children, how much more shall your Father which is in Heaven, give good things to them that ask him?* If a Father will answer when a son asks, much more will God: Yea though when a son asks, a Father will not answer; though when a son asks, a Father mocks, and in stead of bread gives him a stone, in stead of Fish a serpent, though in stead of granting, he crosses his sons petition; yet be confident your Father in Heaven will answer, he will not mock, he will not give stones for bread, nor a serpent for Fish; he loves to be giving, and to be giving good gifts is his delight.

Further, From these words taken together, we may Observe, That

As it is sinful, so it is extreemly dangerous to mock those who have the ear of God, or acceptance with God in prayer.

Will you use him ill that can go and tell God how you have used him, and shall be sure to be heard? It is uncomely to mock an enemy, it is more for one friend to mock another, it is yet worse to mock a friend in his affliction; but it is worst of all to mock any man living that is praying in Faith, and humbling himself before God. Such the Psalmist brands, *ye have shamed the Council of the poor, because God is his refuge.* (*Psal. 146.*) That is, ye have derided godly men, when ye have heard them pray in their affliction. The great wits and politicians of the world smile at the simplicity of those who make such a business of prayer in times of distress: who, when they hear of any troubles arising, presently give this counsel, come let us go pray and seek God. This counsel of the poor *they shame*; and think them silly fellows who give it. They had rather lay their heads together a plotting, then their hearts together a praying. And if such joyn in counsel to call for prayers in times of trouble, it is not out of an opinion, much less out of Faith that it will do any good, or prevail any thing, but only to please the people, or comply with a party: for in truth they shame those counsels of the poor,

as the poorest Counsels. Some are ashamed of prayers, and others will put them to shame who pray. The best I can do for such as deride prayer, or those who pray, is to pray for them, as Christ for his crucifiers, *Easter forgive them, for they know not what they doe.* Doe you know what you doe, when you mock a man that can pray? I believe you do not, therefore I will tell you: you mock that spirit by which he prays, you provoke God to whom he prays, you stir up the whole Church against you, for whom he prays, you set the chariots & horsemen of Israel against you, you turn armies against you, that is, you turn the prayers of all the people of God against you, when you turn against prayer. Do you know what it is to provoke such who can complain to God of your provocations? You were better have tales told of you to the greatest enemy you have in the world, then to have tales told of you unto God, by those, whom he is pleased to number among his friends.

Job having thus set forth how he had been assaulted by men, and how he had retreated to God; now laies down a general proposition, as a corollary or conclusion drawn from all, *The just upright man is laughed to scorn.*

The just upright man.

Job speaks still in the third person, he doth not say, *I who am a just upright man*, as derided; he speaks modestly as, *Paul, 2 Cor. 12. I knew a man.* So here, *The just upright man.*

Both words are near a kinne in signification, the one at most doth but explain and heighten the other. *The just upright man*, is the man justly upright, or uprightly just. The latter word is plural in the Original, (as *Gen. 6. 9.*) noting a man that acts in the exactness of uprightness, even all manner of uprightnesses, or a man so upright, that he hath the uprightness of many men in him; for as we say of some men who are egregiously dishonest, that when dishonest men are scarce, they may go for twains; so some men are so exactly upright, that where upright men are scarce (as they are every where) they may be reckoned for two or many.

But how is this just man, who hath the uprightness of many upright men in him, entertained in the world? doe not all reverence and adore him? The next words shew us his usage, *The just upright man,*

צדיק

חסיד

*Iustus perfecti
perfecte iustus
i. e. iustissimus,
Vel integritas
perfectio.
Vox Thamim
adverbialiter
piest sum.*

Is laughed to scorn.

פִּנְו
*Irrisio iustus
 perfectus. Heb.
 Hic te ludos
 facit. Plaut.*

He was mockt before, now he is *laughed to scorn*. The Original is the same, though the sence be intended; he is not only laughed at, but he is a laughter. *The perfect just is a mockage*, so Mr. Broughton, the abstract is put for the concrete. A man that is through in justice, through in integrity & purity, this man is made a laughing stock, a jest, a sport, he is loaded with disgrace, while some are unburdening themselves of sorrow. They resolve to laugh and be fat, to be merry and sing care away, but they want a theme, a subject: none so fit as the *just upright man*: Come let's passe upon him: Thus *He is laughed to scorn*. As if Job had said, *It is no great wonder to see that I am mocked of my neighbour, for this is according to the wont and old custome of the world, the just upright man meets with such dealing every where; it is no new thing which I suffer, mine is but a common lot with the best of the Saints. If I am laughed to scorn, so have my betters been.* Hence Note,

First, *That holiness is under disgrace among unholy men.*

It is not alwaies a disparagement to be laughed at, the best may be laughed at, *the just upright man is so*. Jeremiah was more then so, he was a Prophet of the Lord, yet he saith, *I was a derision to all my people, and their song all the day*, Lam. 3. 14. He was a derision, and a derision to all his people. Some read thus, *I, together with all my people, am a derision*, as noting that he and all that adhered to him or owned him, were derided. So speaks the Prophet Isaiah typically of Christ, chap. 8. 18. *Behold I, and the Children which thou hast given me, are for signes and for wonders in Israel*. Our translation makes all his people deriders of him? And then all doth not include every individual, but only shews the great and general Apostacy of that people, from all respect to this Prophet, or to his ministry. How often doth holy David, that Heavenly singer, complain of those who made hellish songs upon him? And Job complains of this more then once, read Chap. 17. 2. 6. Chap. 21. 3. &c. Paul was one of the ablest speakers, in the mysteries of the Gospel, that ever lived: yet when he came to Athens (Act. 17.) they say, *what will this babler say?* Solomon gives us a proverb to this point (Prov. 14. 2.) *He that walketh in his uprightness, feareth the Lord; but he that is perverse in his waies, despiseth him.* It is a truth, if we understand the antecedent

cedent to him, to be the Lord, and so make the opposition thus, *He that walketh in his uprightness, feareth the Lord, but he that is perverse in his waies despiseth him, that is, despiseth the Lord.* But the meaning of the proverb is this, *A man walking in his uprightness feareth God, but a perverse man will despise him that walketh in his uprightness, you are so precise, you go so gingerly, as if you were passing a narrow bridge over a deep precipice, you will not turn aside or step awry, nor you: thus he is despised.* The Apostle reports us a great example of this unholy scorn, (*Gal. 4. 29.*) *He that was born after the flesh, did persecute him that was born after the spirit.* Ishmael persecuted Isaac. Moses tells us the manner how, and the weapon wherewith; *Ishmael did not lift up his hand against Isaac (as Cain did against Abel) but his tongue; He mocked him, (Gen. 21. 9.)* Those greatest differences in divine Heraldry of being *born after the flesh and after the spirit*, shew where the quarrel lay, it was the spiritualness of Isaac, which rendered him so obnoxious to his carnal brother Ishmael. Isaac was born after the spirit, & doubtless he shewed some fruits of the spirit, which Ishmael did not relish, and therefore mocked him. *Even so it is now* (saith the Apostle there) & we may now say, *even so it is now*: the reason of it is that of the Apostle, (*1 Cor. 2. 14.*) *The natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him.* A rational man laughs at, and scorns a foolish thing; Now the natural man hath reason enough (he may be a man of the most sublimated reason) but having no grace, he understands not the things of the spirit of God, therefore *they are foolishness unto him*; Those things which are fullest of Divine wisdom, are counted most foolish by him that understands them not. As they are fools who cannot understand, so some wise men count many things foolish which yet are above their understanding. No marvail then, if they use them as foolish things, if they mock and scorn them; no marvail, if they deride those who trouble themselves with such baubles and toys as they conceive the things of God to be. No marvail, if they count them a company of hairbrain fellows, who are most conscientious about them. Hence it is that Gospel simplicity is mockt as simpleness, punctual obedience, as scrupulousness, sorrow for sin, as dumpishness, zeal, as madness, contempt of the world as ignorance of the worth of it, self-denial, as a wronging of our selves. It is recorded in the life of

Christians ab
Ethnicis derisi
Junt qui vide-
buntur genus
hominum Super-
stitionis nova-
ty malefica
Sunt in vita
Neron.

of Nero, that the Christians were despised and mockt as a sect of silly fools, by the wise Citizens and grave Senators of Rome, because they seemed to use a strange kinde of superstition, or a new Religion, and would be wiser in their generation then the rest of the world. Reproach is one of Satans choice engines to batter Sion with, he hath scarce such another shaft in all his quiver to wound Religion at the heart with. This Lyon in the way frights many from entring into, or appearing in the wayes of God. It causeth others to apostize and forsake the wayes of God, after they have entred into, and for a time appeared in them. As Zedekiah durst not obey the word of the Lord, in rendring himself to the Babylonians, so many are afraid to obey the word of the Lord in rendring themselves up to Sion, lest some finding them there should mock them, Jer. 38. 19.

Secondly Observe,

As Holiness in any degree is subject unto scorn, so they who are most holy, meet with most scorn.

The just upright man, who would be holy to the height, shall have scorn to the height. If a man serve God (as David daunced before the Ark) with all his might, a Michaels wit will mock and reem with a prophane jest, though she be cursed with barrenness all her life after. That childe of the flesh made her flesh childless unto the day of her death, 2 Sam. 6. 23. If a man do (as Christ expects) some singular things, he may quickly be laughed at for singularity. Paul in the high actings of his faith was accounted mad, 2 Cor. 5. 13. It is possible to move in the ordinary course and common round of Religion, and to have fair quarter, yea to have respect and be accounted wise in the world; but he that will be a just upright man, that is, he that sticks at small matters, & acts the greatest; He that will not go an hairs breadth from the minde of Christ, and will do his whole minde, he that will walk precisely, accurately, and as we say in print, this man may soon have the honour to be called a fool in print, at best he shall be laughed at, let him look for it; all holiness may come under contempt, but the more holy you are, the more subject you are unto contempt: never think to get credit in the world by your holiness: It is enough that holiness hath credit with God and good men. The Apostle assures us (Heb. 11.) That those worthies of the Jewish Church (whose names sparkle like bright starres in the Firmament of that Chapter) obtained a

good

good report, through faith (verſ. 2.) But of whom, or with whom? did the world think the better of them, or well of them, becauſe of thoſe high and heroical actings of their faith? No, the 36th. Verſe tells us, they were both ſcourged, and mocked by the world for all their faith. Theſe gallant men in grace, had a good report with none but gracious men, and the God of grace. If we will now live after their rate by faith, and walk in the uppermoſt regions of Religion, we muſt expect a good report there only, where they found it. *Thoſe works of faith which are moſt above reaſon ſeem to be without reaſon,* and that which is moſt pleaſing unto God, ſeems to have not ſo much as any thing of a man in the eyes of many men: you venture not only liberty, eſtate and life, but your very diſcretion if you walk in the cleanest paths of wiſdom. *Few have holy wiſdom enough to be accounted fools, or ſeriouſneſs enough in the things of God to be laughed at, eſpecially to be laughed to ſcorn.* No man knows where his worldly loſſes will end, when once he hath gained Chriſt. It is an experienced truth, which is lent us by a Noble Patriot yet living. *That man will but deceive himſelf who hopes to ſave any thing by his Religion but his ſoul. The juſt upright man is laughed to ſcorn, and the more juſt he is, the more he is laughed at.*

JOB Chap. 12. Vers. 5, 6.

He that is ready to slip with his Feet, is as a lamp despised in the thought of him that is at ease.
The Tabernacles of Robbers prosper, and they that provoke God, are secure, into whose hand God bringeth abundantly.

IN the former context which contained the preface to this ensuing discourse, Job taxeth the pride and self-conceitedness, the scorn and contemptuousness of his friends. They thought themselves the chief of men, and mocked him, as if he had not been so much as a man, or not to be numbred among men.

Now he enters upon the argument it self; And in these two Verses laies down two positions in direct opposition to what Zophar had asserted. He at the 17th. verse of the 11th. Chapter, describes the state of a godly man, exceeding the light of the noon-day, and of the morning. *Thine age shall be clearer than the noon-day, and thou shalt be as the morning, &c.* And at the 20th. verse he gives ungodly men their doom. *The eyes of the wicked shall fail, and their hope shall be as the giving up of the ghost.* Both these conclusions are contradicted by Job, the former in the 3th. Verse, and the latter in the 6th. In the 5th. *He that is ready to slip with his feet, is as a lamp despised;* As if he had said, *Thou tellest me that a godly man shall be brighter than the sun at noon, that his brightness shall increase like the morning sun, more and more unto the perfect day; whereas, alas, I see all the light which many a godly man hath, no bigger than a candle or a lamp, and that not like the light of a great candle neither, or of a goodly beautiful lamp, but like the light of some poor candle of the sixteens, or of the meanest lamp. There is a great difference between a lamp and the sun. What is the light of the most shining lamp, to the light of the sun? but the difference is greater between the sun & a base blinking lamp. I see their light no clearer, than that of a despised lamp, whose light thou talkest up to the sun at noon for clearness: The believeth men, if afflicted, do but smother instead of shining. Again, thou tellest me that The eyes of the wicked shall fail, and that their hope shall be as the giving up of the ghost; but I have often seen and*

can give thee proof of it, the eyes of such are blest and refreshed with the desire of their eyes; they see what they most desire, prosperity in their dwellings. The Tabernacles of Robbers prosper, and they that provoke God are secure, into whose hand God bringeth abundantly. Thus the opposition stands in these two Verses, as they are an answer to what Zophar had promised as the portion of the righteous, and threatened as the lot of wicked men.

He that is ready.

That is, he that is very neer slipping. The Hebrew (*Nachon*) signifies to be prepared or disposed, yea to be destinated to such a purpose, it signifies also to be fixed and settled (*Psal. 108.*) *O God, my heart is fixed, or, my heart is ready.* He that is ready to slip, is, as it were, fixed to slip, he is set in a state wherein he cannot stay. All men in the world are in an unsettled estate, in a slippery condition, but some are in a more slippery condition, than others; They are (as we say) next door to destruction, within a step of danger, ready to tumble and fall from the pinnacle of their prosperity. *There are preparations for ruine as well as for rising. He that is ready*

Frequens est in Scriptura usus vocis נָחֹן pro eo quod est dispositus, destitutus.

To slip with his feet.

There is a two-fold slipping with the feet spoken of in Scripture.

First, There is a slipping into sin; of that David speaks, *Psal. 73. 2.* *As for me, my feet were almost gone, my steps had well nigh slipped, when I saw the prosperity of the wicked;* that is, I had almost sinned, I was tempted to hard thoughts of God and of his waies, as he explains himself at the 13th. Verse of that Psalm, shewing what the slip was, *Then said I, verily I have cleansed my heart in vain, and washed my hands in innocency;* This was the thing he was ready to fall into, to look upon all his labour, as lost labour, as labour in vain, which he had bestowed in attendance upon the duties of holiness and repentance.

נָטָוּי. Nativit. Nativitas pedum denotat ruinam, calamitatem, casum adversum, et firmitatem pedum constantem verum secundarium statum.

Secondly, *Slipping with the feet*, is to fall into affliction. When we decay and decline in honour, credit, riches, and possessions, we may be said to have got a slip. 'Tis a proverbial speech, and we finde it frequent in Scripture; *his foot shall slip,* that is, he shall down, his state shall change. *Moses* describes the Lord thus speaking of his enemies (*Deut. 32. 35.*) *To me*

belongeth vengeance and recompence, what then? Their foot shall slide in due time; these men supposed themselves settled upon a rock, that they were so established that nothing could remove them; but in due time they shall finde that they stood upon ice, or glafs; their foot shall slide, they shall fall from their heights and seeming holds in due time. So (Psal. 94. 18.) *When I said, my foot slippeth, thy mercy, O Lord, held me up*, that is, when I gave my self for a lost man in the world, then the Lord supported me. (Jer. 13. 16.) *Give glory to the Lord your God, before he cause darkness, and before your feet stumble upon the dark mountains*. Dark mountains, are mountains of sorrow and trouble, to stumble upon the dark mountains, is to be ruined among our troubles. To stumble, slip, fall, run all into the same sense. In pursuance of which, the state of wicked men is called a slippery state, and the place upon which they stand, a slippery place. Psal. 73. 18. *David being much troubled at the prosperity of wicked men, and so troubled that his steps had well nigh slipt, staid, or recovered himself, by remembring that his enemies did not stand fast. I went into the Sanctuary of God, and there I found that thou didst set them in slippery places*; and when he found that their estate was slippery, that they should shortly fall, then he kept his ground and stood upright. Who can envy or be grieved to see a man in an estate great and prosperous, wherein yet there is no continuance, or from which he must shortly fall, and in the fall bruise and hurt himself more, than he did comfort himself in his standing? all the things of this life, especially to wicked men, are set in slippery places. The world it self is slippery, and so is all that's in it. The world may be compared to that sea of glafs (Rev. 4. 6.) It is a sea for the uncertain motions, and tempestuousness of it, and it is like a sea of glafs for the slipperiness of it. Glafs you know yields no good footing, neither doth the world to any that would stay themselves upon it. And as the sliding of our feet speaks the change, so the firmness of our feet, the establishment of our estate, Psal. 121. 3. *He will not suffer thy foot to be moved*; a man cannot go without moving of his feet; and a man cannot stand whose feet are moved. The foot by a *Synechdoche* is put for the whole body, and the body for the whole outward estate: so that, *He will not suffer thy foot to be moved*, is, he will not suffer thee, or thine to be moved or violently cast down. The power of thine oppos-
ers

fers shall not prevail over thee, for the power of God sustains thee. *He will not suffer, &c.* Many are striking at thy heels, but they cannot strike them up, while God holds thee up. If the will of thine enemies might stand, thou shouldst quickly fall. But God will not suffer, &c.

Hence. Observe,

That the best earthly estate in it self, is a tottering estate.

An earthly estate is so; whosoever is the master of it, unless God will be the establisher of it. This text speaks of the afflictions of the godly, their outward estate is full of uncertainties, their feet (treading earth) are subject to slide. *David* once thought himself so settled, that he should never fall, *In my prosperity I said, I shall never be moved; Lord, by thy favour thou hast made my mountain to stand strong; Psal. 30. 6.* But he quickly felt his feet sliding, and his mountain falling. Worldly men fancy and project to themselves an everlastingness in worldly things *Psal. 49. 11.* *Babylon* boasts (*Revel. 18. 7.*) *I sit a Queen*; she doth not say, *I am*, but, *I sit a Queen*, as if she had said, *I am not only in an high place, but in a sure place, I have a warm and a firm seat, I am well settled. I sit a Queen and am no Widow, and shall see no sorrow, I feel no sorrow, neither do I fear any, I shall have no changes.* Presumption makes the soul believe it foresees, and therefore prophesies as great things as faith can. The Prophet *Zachary* (Chap. 1. 11.) hath Christ represented in a vision, sending out the Angels, those heavenly scouts or intelligencers to bring him in a report, how things went in the world *These are they (ver. 10.) whom the Lord hath sent to walk to and fro through the earth,* and what is the report they bring? *Behold all the earth sitteth still and is at rest.* The earth of wicked men, did not only as they thought, stand fast, but had set themselves down soft and sure, they thought themselves sitting upon down pillows for ease and softness, and upon rocks of Adamant for sureness and unmoveableness; they sate still and were at rest, yea doubtless they said in their hearts, who shall raise us up? Both the posture and the confidence of literal *Babylon* was like that of mystical *Babylon*; yet as old literal *Babylon* (though she sate still and close in her seat, yet slid and fell at last) so also shall mystical *Babylon*. She that said, *I shall see no sorrow, shall see nothing but sorrow.* Now if the feet of that great temporal monarchy did slide, and the feet of this spiritual mo-

*Hic versiculus
obscurus est.
Merc.*

*Vix לִפִּיר p. o-
prie tadam vel
facem significat
non illud vascu-
lum in quo ignis
oleo nutritur
Aben Ezra in
לִפִּיר*

*Lamech servile
facit ut פִּיר*

*sit calamitas i-
dem quod פִּיר
infartunium: ut
hoc de se dicat
per tertiam per-
sonam; sum ut
qui esset speciosus
in mente felicitas
hominis ob affli-
ctionem & ca-
lamitatem.*

*Tada despecta
est tada con-
sumpta qua
jam usui
esse non possit
ad pralucen-
dum. Dum pra-
lucebat in pre-
tio erat s. d. con-
sumpta contem-
nitur. Merc.
Lampas con-
tempia proprie
pro re vilissima
& inuili ha-
bita proverbial-
iter est locutio
quo vi. um nul-
lus pretii sig-
nificant Hebrai.
Bold.*

narchy must, both which have had as sure footing as the world with all its wit and strength, policy and power, were, or are able to make, what then may the weaker and more uncompact parts of the world expect. There is no firm standing upon that which is unfirm; if our foundation be unsure, our footing cannot be sure, moveable creatures will never put us into an unmoveable condition. The soul standeth fast in Christ alone, when we once fix upon him, we are fixed, our feet may slip or slide, I confess, though we are in him, but they shall not slip or slide from him at all for ever. *He that is ready to slip with his feet,*

Is as a lamp despised.

The words of this text are somewhat dark, and there are not a few who make the *lamp* the darkest word in it. One of the Rabbins reads very differently. The word which signifies a *lamp*, he divideth into two words. *Lamech* prefixed is servile (as Grammarians speak) noting as much as *for*, or *because of*, and *pid*, destruction, calamity, or sorrow: So it is taken, chap. 3 v. 29. *If I have rejoiced at the destruction of him that hated me,* and then the sense is, as if *Job* in the third person had spoken thus, *I am as a man despised in the thoughts of him that is in prosperity, because of my afflictions:* But I shall not insist upon this translation of the word, which yields us this sense, though it stand entire under the notion of a torch or link, which are carried in the streets to give light, or (as we render) of a lamp, which is a Vessel, filled with oil, and fitted with wick, giving light in the house. Every one knows what a lamp is, but what is a despised lamp? a despised lamp, is a lamp whose frame is old, worn, batter'd and out of fashion, or whose oil is consumed. A lamp or a torch is very desirable in a dark night, but when 'tis day, or when the torch is burnt down to the last inch, and the lamps oil is spent to the last drop, then both are despised, who cares for either? So that, for a man to be looked upon as a despised lamp, is a proverbial speech, importing, that he is of no more value than a thing of naught.

A despised lamp is of the same signification with a smoking firebrand. When the people of *Israel* were in a great fear, at the invasion of *Rezin* and *Remaliah's* son, and the heart of *Abaz* the King, moved as theirs, like the trees of the forest shaken with

with the wind; the Lord bids the Prophet, *say unto him, Take heed, and be quiet, fear not, neither be faint-hearted: What? not fear when such mighty enemies are coming against us: No faith he; fear not for the two tails of these smoking fire brands* (Isa. 7. 4.) *Aha!* and the *Israelites* lookt upon them, as the flame of a devouring fire that would burn and consume all, no, saith God, they are but as *smoking fire-brands*, they are but brands ends, they have almost consumed themselves, they are smoking rather than burning, they will soon go out. A *smoking brand* is a proverb for that which is almost spent, whose violence you need not fear, it can do no great hurt, nor can it stand you in any stead. As *smoking flax* in the Gospel (*Matth. 12. 20.*) notes the lowest degree of grace, which Christ will not quench nor put out, so a *smoking fire brand* notes the least degree of hurtful power remaining, or malice vexed out; and a smothering lamp, the least degree of useful remaining power, or comforts wearied out. On the other side, a bright burning lamp, or the lighting of a candle, expresseth the beginnings of honour and excellency, or our continuance in the enjoyment of them. (*Psal. 18. 28.*) *Thou wilt light my candle, the Lord my God will enlighten my darkness.* See what an office holy faith puts God unto; David believed that God would come and light his candle; what candle? his meaning is that the Lord would renew his estate, and chase away the darkness which lay upon it. *Thou wilt light my candle;* thou wilt cause me to shine clearly and fairly in the world, though I have been a while as a candle extinguishd, or burnt out. The Prophet sets the hoped and prayed for restoration of *Sion* under a like metaphor and allusion (*Isa. 63. 1.*) *For Sions sake I will not hold my peace, and for Jerusalems sake I will not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth.* That is, till the estate of the Church be beautiful and glorious. Now as a burning lamp is the emblem of a happy, so a dying despised lamp is the emblem of a miserable condition. For what's a broken dying lamp worth? what's the snuff of a candle worth? or a candle burnt down to the socket? of no more worth is many a gracious soul in the thoughts of worldly wealthy men, when once he hath lost the wealth of the world. Riches are to the reputation of man, as oil to the lamp, they feed and nourish it, they cause it to shine out with a resplendent brightness: but when riches

are

are conſumed, a mans reputation conſumes too, he is a deſpiſed lamp: Thus the intendment of *Job* is obvious, and may be drawn into this plain obſervation.

Terra ſi fuerint nubila ſolus erit. (That they whoſe eſtates are ſliding and falling are ſubject to deſpiſing. Or more briefly thus, They who are afflicted are uſually ſlighted.)

Affliction ſubjects us to contempt. Chriſt appeared meanly in his out-ſide, he appeared in an afflicted condition, a man of ſorrows (*Iſa. 53.*) and what was the effect of this? He was deſpiſed and reſected of men (*ver. 3.*) and we hid as it were our faces from him, and we eſteemed him nor. Unhappy poverty (ſaith the Hea-then Poet) hath nothing in it more unhappy than this, that it makes men ſcorned and derided. A man emptied of riches is uſually filled with contempt. They that ſlide ſhould be liſted up, as the Law ordered concerning the Aſs overburthened, and the Ox

fallen into a Pit; but when a man is fallen under the burthen of affliction, uſually another burthen, the burthen of contempt is laid upon him, he is deſpiſed: while we are burning lamps ſhining with riches and greatneſs, we are lookt upon and ſought to, but no ſooner under a vail of want, but thrown by, and regarded no more.

This holds true alſo in regard of internal gifts and endowments; while a man hath great abilities and quick parts, he is as a lamp full of oil, or as a burning light: ſo *John* Baptiſt is deſcribed (*Joh. 5. 35.*) He was a burning and a ſhining light, and ye were willing for a ſeaſon to rejoice in his light, all liked him very well, yea they even danced about him, as children about a bonfire (ſo much the word bears) for a ſeaſon. The lamp of *John's* Miniſtery was always alike, burning and ſhining, his oil did not waſt. 'Tis ſaid indeed by *John* himſelf (*Joh. 3. 30.*) I muſt decreaſe, not that *John* did abate or leſſen his light, but becauſe a greater light coming, his light was obſcured (as the Stars by the Sun) but not at all diminiſhed: but though *John's* light was always alike, yet the Peoples delight in him was only for a ſeaſon: Even they whoſe gifts are not at all abated, may yet finde a great abatement in the acception of their gift; how much more they (which is the caſe of not a few) whoſe gifts are indeed abated? Many are as a burning and ſhining lamp a great while, but at laſt (according to the lamps motto) by ſhining they conſume. Their oil ſpends, their parts inſpair, their

gifts

*Præluſcendo
perco.*

gifts are deaded, *These are despised Lamps.* There are Lamps spoken of, *Matth. 25.* which Christ will despise. The foolish Virgins brought lamps, but they had no oil in them. Some make a great profession, and would be thought burning and shining lights, who yet have no oil, that is, no truth of grace. Lamps without oyl, Christ will despise: But he will not despise a Lamp because it is not gilded with riches and worldly honour, or because not filled with such or such a measure of gifts; that's the way the world goes, let a man have never so much oyl of grace and sincerity in his Lamp, never so much of God and of Christ in his Lamp, if he have not golden oyl in his Lamp, riches and fulness, rare gifts and great parts, he is despised, and cast off.

There is another reading of the words, take it thus; *A man that is as a despised Lamp by those who are at ease, is ready to slip with his feet,* that is, to sin: the words may bear this translation, without any strain to the Text, and with the advantage of another truth, which may be given you in this Observation,

Affliction laies us open unto temptation.

As holy *David* (*Psal. 73.*) was ready to slip with his feet into sin, by seeing wicked men stand so fast in honour while they sinned: So when a holy and righteous man sees himself dishonoured, he is ready to slip with his feet, to sin; and say, *I have cleansed my heart in vain, and washed my hands in innocency.* It is a temptation to be despised, and except the heart be very well settled, the feet will slide. When a hypocrite is despised, he not only slips in, but falls from that profession he formerly seemed to stand in; he casts off the waies of God, when he sees himself cast off by men. They who are well rooted and sound at heart may be sorely shaken, but the rotten hearted, and unsound are rooted up by the strength of this temptation. The third branch of this verse, shews us by whom the man ready to slip is despised, it is

In the thought of him that is at ease.

תש

In the thought.] The word signifies also *clear*, or *pure*, and by a metaphor it notes a thought, because thoughts are as the irradiations and beamings forth of the mind. And the word in special notes *joyful* or *delightful thoughts*; that sence makes the text yet more emphatical. A man compassed about with sorrow is despised

Candidum, nitidum, per metaphoram, denotat cogitationes laetas, quae sunt veluti radij animae.

in the joyful, or rather jolly thoughts of him that is at ease: a man at ease hath pleasant and merry thoughts, & being full of these merry delightful thoughts, he despiseth him who like an expiring Lamp, sits sobbing & smothering in sad and sorrowful thoughts.

Of him that is at ease.

1280
Quietus, tranquillus, & per Metonymiam securus, insolens, quod tranquillius homines securos & insolentes reddat.

Quiet, settled, and (as the word imports by a trope) insolent and secure; ease doth usually make men not only secure, but insolent. *Because they have no changes, therefore they fear not God, Psal 55. 19. It is seldom that their hearts are changed, whose estates feel no change.* Civil changes occasion spiritual: None are further from a spiritual change than they; who fear not God; and they who have no civil changes are very often far from fearing God. *Jerusalem* had little ease a long time, but she is promised it: *Thine eyes shall see Jerusalem a quiet habitation, or, an habitation at ease (Isa. 32. 20.)* *Jerusalem* that now is hath been an unquiet habitation, full of troubles, toft up and down; but at last God will make her a quiet habitation: *Babylon* hath been at ease a great while, but *Jerusalem* shall have her turn to be at ease too.

Iob speaks indefinitely, He is despised in the thought [*Of him that is at ease.*] Let him be who he will; a good man or a bad man, he is apt to despise those that are in great affliction. A godly man is not wholly exempt from this not onely unchristian, but unmanly passion. *Iob* speaks here with an eye to his friends; whom, though he rebukes often very sharply, as acting very sinfully, yet he did not judge as wicked. The best man at ease may not only be unfeeling of his brethrens afflictions, but in a degree slight the afflicted: *Iob* supposes his friends faulty in this, as if he had said, *you (my friends) are at ease and quiet, all things go well with you, I am a poor snuff, a consumed Lamp, and you despise me, you make nothing of my ordinary sorrows, and but light of my heaviest burdens.* A good man may fail thus farre for a time in his duty towards an afflicted friend, and though he fail not thus farre, yet he may come within the verge of this sin *despising*. For we despise the afflicted, not only by reproaching them with our words, and villifying them in our thoughts, but by not laying their afflictions to our hearts, and bearing a part in them, by a brotherly fellow-feeling. When we do not suffer with them,

them, we under-reckon them in their sufferings.

Hence Observe,

First, *They who are at ease, whosoever they are, especially wicked men, are apt to despise those that are in pain.*

Few feel any smart till themselves smart, or any want till themselves are empty. It is bad enough not to feel the smart or want of others, but it is farre worse to insult over it. Of such David makes complaint (*Psalm 123. 4.*) *Our soul is exceedingly fill'd with the scorning of those that are at ease; and with the contempt of the proud.* And again, *The drunkards made songs upon me.* Wine puts the wit in tune for a prophane jest. When David was eating ashes and drinking tears, he was despised by those who did eat the fat & drank the sweet, they cried out, *Where is now thy God?* *Psalm 42. 3.* *David professeth concerning his enemies, (Psalm 35. 13.) When they were sick, my cloathing was sackcloth, I humbled my soul with fasting, and my prayer returned into mine own bosome;* that is, say some, though they got no good by my prayers, yet my own soul did: rather thus; I prayed often and much for them even from my heart; the returning of the praier, may signify his frequent minding of them, and the *bosome*, both secrecy and affectionateness in prayer for them. Lastly, we may read it thus, *Let my prayer return into my bosome*, that is, I wished no worse to them then to my self, let me receive that of God for my portion, which I have desired may be theirs; either of these interpretations shew Davids sympathy even towards his enemies, which the next verse (14.) clears yet more, *I behaved my self as though it had been my friend and brother, I bowed down heavily as one that mourneth for his Mother.* Would you not believe if these enemies of Davids should hear of any affliction befallen him, that they would be in blacks? See how they mourn (as we say) in sack and sugar (*vers. 15, 16.*) *But in my adversity they rejoiced, and gathered themselves together. With hypocritical mockers at feasts, they gnashed upon me with their teeth.* When they were a feasting they were mocking; abusive speeches were as sauce to their meat, and sugar to their wine; and they would forbear a while to employ their teeth at eating, that they might employ them in reviling, *they gnashed upon me with their teeth.* The teeth speak as well as the tongue: gnashing of the teeth hath a loud voice in it. The damned in hell shall gnash their teeth in sorrow for pain, the pain which themselves feel: and the wicked here

on earth, do often gnash their teeth in joy or scorn at the pain which others feel. The Prophet *Hosea* describes the temper of such intemperate feasters (*chap. 7. 5.*) *In the day of our King, the Princes have made him sick with bottles of wine*, that is, in the day of the celebration of the Kings birth, or coronation, or some of those great feasting festivals, the Princes made him drink more than did him good; and what did he then? He was then fit to do evil, and so he did, *He stretched out his hand with scorners*, that is, say some, he took up his cups, or put his hand to his cups, as often, as vile persons, scorners, use to do: or neerer to the point, *He stretched out his hand*, that is, he acted against goodness and good men, against justice and those who are just, even as scorners and contemnors of justice, and goodness, of just and good men, use to do. Neither is it any wonder that men at ease are thus ready to despise the best of men in a low condition, seeing they despise even the most high God. They who serve their lusts cannot serve either God or man, but they can despise both. And their consciences seldom trouble them (whatsoever they doe) who have no trouble in their condition. *Jesurun waxed fat*, Israel was called *Jesurun*, either from *Iosher*, righteousness, because they had received righteous laws, or were called unto righteousness, or from *Shor* to look or see, because this people saw more of the glory of God, than any people under Heaven: yet even this *Jesurun* when he waxed fat, that is, rich and great, then he kicked (*Deut. 32. 15.*) Kicking is an act of contempt; and against whom did he kick? *Moses* tells us, *Then he forsook God that made him, and lightly esteemed the rock of his salvation*. If men at ease venture to despise God, they will not stick at men, least of all at men in their afflictions.

Secondly Observe,

It is very sinfull to despise those that are in affliction.

Job speaks of it not only by way of narration, declaring what was done, but by way of conviction, reproving what was done. If it be sinful not to pity those that are afflicted, then much more to despise them. (*Amos 6. 4.*) *They lye upon their beds of Ivory, and stretch themselves upon their couches*, &c. But they are not grieved for the affliction of *Joseph*; he speaks nothing of their rejoycing at *Josephs* affliction, or that they laughed and passed jests upon him, no, but they did not grieve, they did not pity him in his affliction, this was their sin: how
sinful

sinful then is theirs who despise the afflicted ?

There is another reading of this verse, which I shall only name. *He that is fit to guide the feet of others, is as a despised lamp in the thought of the rich who are at ease.* As if Job had said, they whose holiness is most eminent and exemplary, even leading men in holiness, are despised.

Lucerna contempta iudicio hominis opulenti, qui idoneus est gressus dirigendis. Tyg.

Job having thus crossed Zophar's first assertion, representing the righteous as a despised lamp, whom his friend had compared to the morning light, or noon-day sun : he now proceeds to refute his second assertion, representing the wicked in fullest prosperity, and highest security, *whose eyes, his friend had said, should fail, and whose hope he had compared to the giving up of the ghost.*

Verse 6. *The tabernacles of robbers prosper, and they that provoke God are secure, into whose hand God bringeth abundantly.*

As if he had said, Friend Zophar thou hast affirmed, *that the righteous man is as the shining light* ; I say, *he is but a despised lamp* ? thou affirmest, *that the eyes of the wicked shall fail, &c.*, but I have seen *the tabernacles of robbers prosper, and they that provoke God secure.*

He describes a wicked man, by sins against both tables. First, He sins against his neighbour by injustice ; he is a robber, *the tabernacles of robbers prosper* : Robbery is a sin against the second table ; and robbery is here mentioned by a *synecdoche* for all sins against the second Table. Secondly, He sins against God, he provoketh God, which is the breach of the first Table : and provocation of God is here mentioned by a *synecdoche* for all sins against the first Table. *They that provoke God are secure.* Though every sin against our Brother be also a sin against God, and we may provoke God when the sin is immediately or nextly against our Brother, yet God in the sins of the first Table is chiefly provoked, and those sins are immediately against God ; therefore he putteth both instances. Take a man that breaks the first Table, or the second, take a man that cares not how he wrongs his neighbour, or how he prophanes the name of God, the one prospers, and the other is secure, therefore your position is false, *that the eyes of the wicked shall fail, and that their hope shall be as the giving up of the ghost,*

The Tabernacles of Robbers prosper.

Tabernacula
i. e. quæ ad illas
pertinent uni-
versas.
 77W Prado
nes, vastatores.

That is, the dwellings and families, the affairs & undertakings of robbers, they and all that belong unto them prosper.

Robbers are of two sorts, there are open and violent robbers who waſt, ſpoil and deſtroy all that comes neer them, and care not who ſees : ſuch are warlike robbers ; who bring power to doe, what they cannot do by juſtice. Such were thoſe warlike bands (and at them *Job* aims in this argument) of *Caldeans* and *Sabeans*, who ſpoiled *Job's* eſtate and Cattel. The uſual effect of warre is waſt and ſpoil ; it is ſaid of the Turkiſh warrs, *That where the grand Seignours horſe ſets his foot, no more graſs will grow, he makes hayoke of all.* By Robbers here we may underſtand firſt theſe boiſterous ſons of *Mars*, men of blood and violence, who make their will their law, and think they may do whatſoever they have power to do. God himſelf is called *El-Shaddi*, the mighty God, he is mighty to ſave and mighty to deſtroy, he is able to lay all the world waſt when he pleaſeth, as he once did when the world diſpleaſed him. God can deſtroy as much as he will, but he will not deſtroy as much as he can. Theſe Robbers have their name from the ſame root, becauſe they uſe all their power to deſtroy ; They have a will to deſtroy as much as they can, but they cannot deſtroy as much as they will : If they could, the whole world muſt fall before them, if it will not fall down unto them.

Secondly, There are ſecret Robbers ; deceit and fraud commit Robbery, as well as power and force. Some Rob while they pretend to ſeek for right ; they ſue at law, hoping to pervert juſtice. Some are Rob'd, others are murdered by the law ; The law is a ſhadow to many lawleſs actions. He is a Robber that takes his neighbours right from him by pretence of law, as well as he that takes his purſe in the high way. Again others Rob ſecretly while they ſeem only to ſell. they ſteal, while they tell you you ſhall have a pennyworth for your penny. *Ephraim ſaid, ſurely I am become rich, I have found me out ſubſtance ; in all my labour they ſhall find none iniquity in me, that were ſin, Hoſ. 12. 8.* I have got a great eſtate, and I hope there is none in the world can tax me that I have done them wrong, in all my labour they ſhall find none iniquity : Who ? I wrong ! I ſteal or Rob ! not I ;

I have not stained my trading and commerce with any such foul fact; I confess I have used some subtleties and sleights. I have a little helped my self by art, my calling is a mystery, and if I deal misteriously in it for my own advantage, who can blame me for that? I am sure none can charge me with any open wrong or robbery; in all my labour they shall find none iniquity. And it appears plainly that I have done no such thing; for that were sin, that is, punishment would follow such iniquity; whereas I thrive and prosper: such sales they make who have sold their consciences. To clear this fence, observe what the prophet saith in the former verse, *He is a Merchant, the balances of deceit are in his hand, he loveth to oppress*: When a buyer comes to him for a commodity he weigheth it out fairly in the balance; there's no iniquity; but there is deceit in the balance, or he hath a bagge of deceitful weights, thats iniquity. To deceive with weights is Robbery, as well as to take by force; a man may Rob with a pair of ballances or a meet-wand in his hand, as well as with a sword or pistol in his hand. Both or either of those Robbers may be understood here.

Lastly, Some in stead of Robbers, read, *Rich men*. Rich men are called Robbers, not as if a man could not be Rich without Robbery (The blessing of God, nor their wronging of men makes many Rich; A diligent hand, not a violent nor a fraudulent hand, enriches many) but rich men are called Robbers, because many, if not most rich men, are (in one of these fences) Robbers, or because Riches are always a provocation to Robbery, yea and a help to it. For as in one respect poverty is a temptation to Robbery, (*Prov. 30.9.*) *Feed me with food convenient for me, lest I be poor and steal*; as poverty is a temptation unto stealing, so are Riches. He that hath power, hopes he may oppress, and go unpunished. Some durst not oppress but for the shelter of an high place. A Pirate taken at Sea, and condemned by *Alexander*, said unto him, *I am condemned for Robbing at Sea in a little Ship, but thou Robbest at Land all the world over; and art applauded*: There are more who Steal by reason of their abundance; then by reason of their want; what they have, gives them ability to Rob for more.

The *Tabernacles of Robbers*, whether of the one kind, or of the other, prosper. The Original signifies not only a thriving, but a peaceable condition: They and their Stolen goods lye (for a time)

*Ex eo facile
constat me non
esse peccati va-
um, quod mihi
bene est: Nam-
qui rei sunt cos
Nemesis impu-
ne abire non si-
nit. Jun. in loc.*

של

*Quicquid, p. r
metaphoram,
felix, saluus
fuit.*

time) as safe and quiet as a childe in the Mothers belly. The word bears such a sence.

Hence Observe,

Unjust men, men of violence may prosper for a while.

Robbers may enjoy prosperous safety, and safe prosperity. Having met with texts before about the prosperity of the wicked, I shall not stay upon it here, the next clause also giving further occasion to touch upon it again. The security of those who provoke God, is the same with the prosperity of the Robbers, and they who Rob men, provoke God; yet here to provoke God is a sin of another classis, yea of another nature than to Rob men, Therefore I shall distinctly open it.

They who provoke God, are secure.

Here is the second sort or prosperous wicked men. They who break the second Table, and wrong their Neighbours, prosper; they who break the first, and provoke God, are secure.

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*Movere, commo-
vere, irritare
ad iracundiam.*

They that provoke God.

The word signifies to move, or irritate: it signifies to move corporally and locally (*Job 9 6.*) *He shaketh the earth out of her place.* (*Isa. 23. 11.*) *He shook the Kingdoms.* This word serves in both texts: And hence it is taken for passion or inward distemper against others (*2 King. 19. 28.*) *Because thy rage against me;* word for word, *because thou wast moved against me:* such a one (we say) was moved, exceedingly moved when he was in a rage and angry. They may be said to move God, who provoke him, they attempt to put him out of temper.

To provoke God is more than to sin against God, it is sinning with an high hand, or with such circumstances, as exceedingly aggravate sin. Provocation notes the highest act of displeasure, and therefore that sin which provokes is one of the highest. (*Psal. 106 7.*) *They remembered not the multitude of his mercies, but provoked him at the sea, even the red Sea.* The confluence or meeting together of many sins makes up a provocation.

Such Sinners of the highest stature, Job describes in this secure estate: *They who provoke God;* As if Job had said, *I do not speak of those who sin lightly, who trade in small sins, or sin after the rare and course of ordinary men, that these only are secure; but they who sin provokingly and boldly, they who send defiance*

to heaven by sinning, even these live securely here on earth, These

Are secure.

נִמְנָם

Numerus pluralis abundantiam significat q. d. Magna securitas, & vox originalis eam securitatem denotat quae audaciam & temeritatem parit.

The Hebrew is abstract, and plural, *They that provoke God securities, confidences, are to them*: As (Psal. 11.) we read of the blessednesses of him that walketh in the Law of God; which we translate, *The man is blessed*: So here, *they that provoke God are secure*, or, *securities are to them that provoke God*: They sin against God every way, and they have security every way; they sin against God as much as they can, and they have as much prosperity as they will. All kind of security, is their portion, who commit all kind of impiety.

Hence Observe,

God sometimes gives them greatest worldly peace, who offer him the highest provocations.

Such as will not let God rest, God lets rest. Wicked men would throw God out of Heaven if they could; but he doth not throw them out of the earth, though he can. It is a wonder of patience, that God should let them have any ease, who do their utmost to weary him.

I shall here touch four grounds of this dispensation of God towards wicked men, in temporals.

First, The Lord gives them security, that they may have opportunity to shew themselves, and to bring out those cursed treasures of iniquity stored up in their hearts. If lust were always pinched with poverty, and burdened with affliction: If lust were always in bands and chains, in prison and restraint, under the revenging hand of God, lust could not look like it self; nor discover what it can do. *There had never so much of the sinfulness of men appeared, if so much of the goodness of God had not appeared.* As afflictions draw out the graces of the Saints, so they keep in, and dead the corruptions of the wicked: Many corruptions cannot act at all, but in a warm sun: There are some I confess (unbelief, discontent, murmuring, &c.) which act especially in and frosty seasons, but most are stopt.

Secondly, 'Tis thus, as to discover what men are, so to make them the more unexcusable, for being what they are. What can they say for themselves, who have received so much good from the hand of God, and have required him with so much evil?

D d

What

What plea can they make who anger God while he is giv'g them content; who while God encompaseth them with blessings, compass him about with their rebellions? Thou art unexcusable, O man, who makest such returns. When *Dives* in the parable begs for a drop of water, he is answered: *Son remember, that thou in thy life time hast had thy good things*: Dost thou call now for an abatement of fire and torment, who didst multiply thy sin as fast as thy comforts were multiplied? dost thou call for ease who diddest abuse all thy ease? He hath not a word more to say for himself; his next suit is for his Brethren, that they might not come into that place of torment, out of which he had no hope to escape. *Every mouth will be stop't by these open-ings of the hand of God.*

Thirdly, Such dispensations are both the tryal and honour of the Saints. They will not venture into sinful wayes, though others thrive in them. They see some prosper by Robbery, others advanced by flattery; yet they will not set up those trades, This is an evedence that they love holiness for holiness sake, and hate wickedness (how prosperous soever it is) for wickedness sake. Sin is worse to them then hell. The blackness of that coal offends them more then the heat of it.

Lastly, God doth this; to keep the Saints while they are in the world (which is their proper way of living here) to a life of faith. If all Godly men should prosper and have peace, if all wicked men should suffer and be in trouble, if God should leave visible marks of his displeasure upon every one that provoketh him, and visible marks of favour upon every one that pleaseth him, men would live by sight, and not by faith. In the next life there will be an end of faith; God will then give every one his portion: then no man that provoked God impenitently shall be at ease; nor shall any smart who have sincerely pleased him. Tribulation and anguish shall be upon every soul that sinneth, and every soul that hath taken hold of Christ by faith, and walked in love, shall have life and immortality: every one shall feel what he is, and enjoy what he hath believed. *Heaven and Hell have all in sight, faith will have no work in either.* Here we must alwaies walk by faith, and then most, when godly men are cast down, and when *they who provoke God are secure.*

Into whose hand God bringeth abundantly.

As if he had said, They take courage to provoke God through the abundance which he bestows upon them. Those treasures of good things which he brings into their hands, cause them to bring out those evils which were treasured up in their hearts.

Hence Observe,

Wicked men make the blessings of God jewel for their lusts, and beat their outward comforts into the weapons of an unholý warre against him.

Their bread and their wine, their gold and their silver, their wool and their flax, do but feed and cloath, enrich and strengthen their bale corruptions. *Hos. 13. 6. According to their pasture, so were they filled, they were filled and their hearts was exalted; therefore have they forgotten me:* When the heart is lifted up with the creature, it falls from the Creator, and that proves an occasion of forgetting God, which should be a means of remembering him. The smallest tast of benefits ought to put us in mind of our benefactor. But they had put God out of their minds, while he was putting fat morsels into their mouths, and had filled them with his benefits.

Again, In these words, *Into whose hand God bringeth abundantly,* Job seems to have a special respect to the *Caldeans* and *Sabeans* into whose hands God put all his abundance.

Hence Observe,

What the worst of men have, is of Gods giving, he puts into their hands.

Satan puts wickedness into their hearts, but it is God, who puts power into their hands; God puts the persons and estates of others into their hands. They indeed ascribe all to their own power and policies. So the King of *Babylon* (*Isa. 14.*) boasted, *by my hand and by my power have I done these things,* he forgot that he was an instrument in the hand of God, or that God gave those nations into his hand. The Lord stayes himself from bringing afflictions upon his people by this argument, *Deut. 32. 27. Lest their adversaries should say, our hand is high, and the Lord hath not done all this:* God would not put his people into their hand, because he foresaw they would not acknowledg it: but *sacrifice unto their net, and burn incense unto their drag, as if by*

them their portion had been fat, and their meat plenteous. Man is unwilling to own any beyond himself as the author of his enjoyments. He scarce accounts any thing worth the having, unless it be of his own bringing in.

Further, We translate, *Into whose hand God bringeth.*

Abundantly.

*In cuius manum
venire facit
d. us, sc. omnia
animi sui vota.
Merc.*

The Adverb, *Abundantly*, is not in the Original, our translators adde it in a different letter, as an explication, to shew the bounty of God even to many of them who most designedly disobey him. Such receive not only enough to support their lives, but to satisfy their lusts. They have not only as much as they need, but as much as they desire. God brings Quails into their hands as well as Manna: yet he puts these into their hands not as *love-tokens*, but as *wrath-tokens*. And while the meat is in their mouths, the wrath of God falls, *yea abides upon them*. It is not always a mercy to receive what we would. God brings abundance into their hands, who never had one drop of favour from his heart.

*Ei qui adduxit
Deum in manu
sua Arias
Mont.
Deum gestat in
manu sua, qui
facit sibi De-
um, quem hab-
at in sua pete-
stare, nolens
esse in manu
Dei. Coc.
Non placet
quod nonnulli
Hebræorum
hac ad Idolola-
tras referunt.
Merc.*

There is another reading, which gives an intimation of that particular sin, whereby these secure ones had provoked God. They were such, *as brought God in their hands*, that is, *false worshippers and idolaters*: Such are well described by this periphrasis, *they bring God in their hand*, we render *into whose hand God putteth*, these render *who put God into their hand*. The Jewish Doctors are much for this sense, but it receives little approbation amongst the Latines, and I will not insist upon it: Yet this is a truth, *Idolaters put God in their hand*: True worshippers carry God in their hearts; Idolaters carry God in their hands, that is, they have a God of their own making, an Idol, an Image, is the work of their hands. He that worshippeth according to mans invention, hath his god in his hand. Again, false worshippers may be said to carry god in their hand, because they act as if God were in their power and dispose (or they desire he should be so) not they in his. The *Tyrians* chained *Hercules* to a post, that he might not depart their Country: Other of the Heathen would adopt or reprobate their Gods as they pleased; unless the gods pleased them, they should be no longer gods. This is to bring a god in the hand grossely, and openly: They do it closely and covertly, who are unwilling to be guided by his hand.

They

They who would bring God down to their wills, make laws for God, and they who make a law for God, act as if they had made God. Every thing must receive the rule of its being, where it receives a being.

JOB Chap. 12. Vers. 7, 8, 9, 10.

But ask now the beasts, and they shall teach thee, and the fowls of the air, and they shall tell thee.

Or speak to the earth, and it shall teach thee, and the fishes of the Sea shall declare unto thee.

Who knoweth not in all these, that the hand of the Lord hath wrought this?

In whose hand is the soul of every living thing, and the breath of all mankind.

JOB having checked the pride of his friends, in the four first verses of this Chapter; and opposed the opinion of Zophar in the 5th and 6th, He in this context brings out his proof, which he takes as low as low can be, that so he might raise his conviction the higher. He deals not with him upon the dictates of humane reason, or upon the authority of Scripture; but from the voice of nature, from the common cry and consent of all the creatures: He convokes a synod of beasts and birds, of senecless trees, and mute fishes, to give their suffrage for the determination of the controversy, betwixt him and his friends.

Differuntur O amici per aq. de sapientia et potentia Dei, quod domnia creat et conservat, quasi hac mihi incognita essent, nam vobis tacentibus docent ne hac creatura. Mort.

Ask now the beasts and they shall tell thee.

As if Job had said, Friend Zophar, thou hast discoursed about the providence of God; as if it were all riddle or mystery, which none but learned men could teach, and none but men of extraordinary parts could understand; But surely thou needest not speak so high, or in the clouds for as much as the beasts of the earth, the fowls of the air, &c. may be our masters to teach us the wisdom and power of God, though men should be silent. These have a voice, these have tongues like trumpets to proclaim a providence in ordering the world, and that God doth, both in heaven and earth, what forever pleases him.

him: And therefore though the wisdom of God be higher then heaven, deeper then hell, broader then the sea, and longer then the earth, though there is a wisdom of God, and much in all his wisdom, which no creature can comprehend, yet his wisdom receives testimony from every creature, and we need not make such weary and long journeyes to find out so much of it as concerns our instruction and satisfaction. Ask now the beasts, and they shall teach thee.

Hence Observe,

All creatures have a teaching voice, they read us divinity lectures of Divine Providence.

*Non est ullum
animalculum
tam exiguum in
quo non plus
discere possimus
quam in omni-
bus sculptis,
pictis aut fuis
simulacris.
Lavat.*

Christians, who have not only reason but grace, may learn from creatures which have not so much as life or sense. Images made by man are teachers of lies, but the things which God hath made are teachers of truth. And hence it is that Christ himself taketh up parables from the meanest of the creatures to instruct his hearers. I confess there is no knowledge like the knowledge of Christ, and of him crucified: The cross of Christ is the chief subject of holy study: As the Apostles resolve assures (1 Cor. 2.) *I determined to know nothing among you but Christ and him crucified.* All knowledge without the knowledge of Christ is but ignorance: Yet there is a usefulness of knowledge from natural things, as subservient unto spiritual. Grace in the heart of a believer improves common earthly objects to holy ends, as having a stamp of heaven upon them. *The world below is as a glass wherein we may see the world above.* They who cannot read other books may run and read this: It is the *Plowmans Alphabet*, the *Shepherds Kalender*, the *Travellers Perspective*, through which he receives the lively spices of infinite excellencies in God. We may meditate from the sun to the stone, from the cedar to the hyssop that groweth on the wall, from the Angel to the worm that creepeth on the ground, from all, from the least of these we may know much of the great God: it is the scope of the Apostle (Rom. 1.) to convince those who do not. It is reported of one who had but little or no knowledge at all in arts and sciences, or skill in tongues, and yet was full of knowledge in heavenly things, that being asked, how he came by that knowledge, having not read books, He said he had a book which he read continually, which had three great leaves, *the Heaven, the Earth, the Waters*, the creatures contained in these, were as so many letters, out of which he spelled many mysteries, & comfortable truths. Though the

*Seculum est
Speculum.*

the creature is not able to lead us into a saving knowledge of the mysteries of Christ, yet it gives us such advantages to know God, as will leave us unexcusable in our ignorance.

There are four things which the creatures teach us.

First, They teach us that there is a God; and much of that which God is, (*Rom. 1. 20.*) *The invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead.* As faith sees him that is invisible, so sense shews us him that is invisible: Faith sees God in himself; sense shews us God in his works.

Secondly, The whole creation teacheth us ready obedience to the will of God; All creatures obey the law of their creation: *fire and hail, snow and vapours, stormy winde and tempest fulfilling his word, Psal. 148. 8.* And if there be any stop at all, or interrupt on in their obedience, if they do not fully answer the end for which they were created, it is either to reprove or to punish mans disobedience.

Thirdly, All creatures teach us dependance upon God. Things without life are expressed as putting forth acts of faith towards the living God. (*Hos. 2. 21.*) the earth cries to the heavens, and the corne, and the wine, and the oyl cry to the earth; there is an intercryng from the lowest to the highest, till the cry come up to the most high God. The whole presents us with an *elegant prosopoeia*, All the creatures striving to do them good, to whom God had once betroathed himself in mercies & in loving kindness; yet all (in a chain of dependance) confessing their inability to do them good without help from God. The corn, and the wine, and the oyl would feed and refresh *Jezreel*, but then the earth must give these rooting, juice and nourishment; The earth is willing to do her office, and give out her strength to these, that these might strengthen *Jezreel*, but then the heavens must open their Treasury, and let down their rain, and heat, and influences into the bosome and bowels of the earth to make it fertile. The Heavens are ready to befriend the earth at her request with these enriching dowries of rain, heat and influence, but the Heavens cannot send a shower, nor the sun aray, till God gives commission, and therefore they cry to God to *unbind the sweet influences of pleiades, and loose the hands of Orion*, that so, God commanding the Heavens, the Heavens may feed the earth, and the earth may feed the corn, the wine, the oyl, and these may feed *Jezreel*,
- the

the beloved ones of God. Thus *the eyes of all wait, or look up unto God,* (*Psal. 145. 15.*) that they may receive good, Such is the very manner of their subsistence as declares their dependance: they wait upon God, and shall not we?

Fourthly, the whole creation teacheth us, that there is somewhat more provided for us then we now enjoy. The Apostle makes that use of it (*Rom. 8. 19.*) *The earnest expectation of the creature, waiteth for the manifestation of the Sons of God;* But how can the creation have an earnest expectation? not that the creature is able to put forth such an act directly, for then it must have not only life, but reason and grace, but there is somewhat in the creature, not only like expectation, but like an earnest expectation; the creature stretcheth out (as it were) its head to look for these things, and is weary till it receives them: We know (saith the Apostle, *vers. 22.*) *that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now.* Now if the irrational and inanimate creatures which have been tired out by mans sin, and made subject to vanity, by reason of mans vanity, if they live under an expectation, how much more should man himself? Shall liveless creatures be restless in their present condition which our sin hath brought upon them, and shall we who are the sinners rest in that condition? Shall the world groan under a state of vanity, and shall we rejoyce and satisfie our selves in it? The beasts of the earth may teach us better, and the fowls of the air may instruct us to soar to a more heavenly pitch of spirit.

בהמות

Pectora campi.
Elephas dicitur
Behemoth numero plurali, a
vastitate corporis,
quod quasi a multis
jumentis compos-
itus videatur.
* Patheticus
admodum est il-
lemodus loquen-
di in scripturis,
quando quis ce-
lum terram aut
animalia ratio-
ne destituta al-
loquitur, Bold.

Ask now the Beasts.

The word *Behemoth*, signifies all sorts of beasts, whether wilde or tame; yet most usually those that are wilde and savage, such as will not come to hand: to take the word in that strictness, inlargeth the sence, as if Job had said, *The worst, the most unreach- able of the Beasts, will teach thee, those Beasts which have nothing in them but cruelty and fierceness, but rage and ravening, will in- form thee.* The Elephant, in this book, is called *Behemoth*, which word is in the plural number, as if we should say, *Beasts*, intimating the huge vastness of the Elephant, that he hath (as it were) many beasts summ'd up in him, there are *Behemoth*, or *Beasts*, in that one Beast.

Ask the beasts. * It is usual in Scripture to turn us to the irra- tional creatures, when we depart from, or act below reason.

To

To put a man to School to the beasts, implies beastly ignorance; *Ask now the Beasts*, they will convince thee, or stop thy mouth. The Prophet brings in the Lord bespeaking Heaven and Earth, (*Isa. 1. 2.*) *Hear O Heavens, and give ear O Earth, I have nourished and brought up children; and they have rebelled against me*; So, *Deur. 32. 1.* *Give ear O ye Heavens and I will speak, and hear O Earth the words of my mouth*: Moses tells the people that the very Heavens and Earth shou'd shame them if they would not hearken. Now as when at any time God appealeth to; or bespeaketh the Heavens and the Earth, and makes them his witnesses or hearers, it is to shame mans deafness and rebellion, as if inanimate creatures, were more ready to hear and receive instruction than man. So when he bids us go, or sends us to inanimate creatures, to hear them speak, it is to shame mans dulness, as if they were more ready to give instruction, then we to receive and entertain it. Thus Solomon sends the Sluggard to the Ant, *Go to the Ant, thou Sluggard*: The little Pismire shall teach thee, there thou shalt learn a lesson of Laboriousness and Industry to provide for thy self and rhine. The Apostle saith, *He that provideth not for his own house is worse than an Infidel*, because the light of nature teacheth a man to provide for his house: But we may say, he that provideth not for his house is worse than a beast, worse than the creeping things of the earth, because the light of nature teacheth them to do so. *Go to the Ant, thou Sluggard, consider her wayes, and be wise. Isa. 1. 3.* Go to the Oxe and to the Ass, O unthankful man, they will teach thee, *The Oxe knoweth his owner, and the Ass his Masters crib*; as the Prophet speaks to the Heavens and the Earth, he desires them for his Hearers rather than men; so he sends the people to the Oxe and Ass that they should be their Teachers, when they refused to hear him. *Ask now the beasts*, they are wise and learned enough to direct thee in this point.

They shall teach thee.

These words carry a double figure in them, either a *Prosopopeia*, which is the imitation of a person, or the attribution of speech and reason, to things speechless and irrational: or a *Metonymy of the effect*, *Ask the beasts and they shall teach thee*, that is, study the beasts, and this knowledge is attained. Meditation is both the Daughter and the Mother of wisdom. They who have no

wisdom cannot meditate, and they who meditate shall have more wisdom. The creatures teach us when we think of them: they teach us, though not formally, yet virtually. They answer and resolve the question put to them, though not explicitly, to the ear, yet convincingly to the conscience: *Ask now the beasts, and they shall teach thee.*

Hujusmodi interrogatio est mentis operatio quæ creaturarum perfectiones intuemur ac meditamur. Tunc homo creaturas interrogat quando eas diligenter considerat, sed tunc interrogata respondent cum homo respicit quod tanta ordinatio esse non possit nisi ab aliqua superiore sapientia dispen-
sante, Aquin.

So then, we ask the creatures, when we diligently consider them, when we search out the perfections and virtues which God hath put into, or stamped upon them: To set our minds thus upon the creature, is to discourse with the creature. *The questions which man asks of a beast, are only his own meditations.* Again, the creatures teach us, when we in meditation make out Collections and draw down a demonstration of the power, wisdom, and goodness of God in making them, or of the frailty of man in needing them; such conclusions and inferences, are the answers and teaching of the creature. It is an excellent passage of *Augustine*, to this purpose, in the 10th book of his *Confessions*, *I put the question, saith he, to the Earth, and to the Sea, and to the rest of the Creatures, and they gave me an answer. Now if you would know what my question was, it was the deep meditation and consideration I had in my heart about the creatures: And would you know what their answer was? their answer was that which I collected in my Meditations from their several natures, qualities, and properties.* So then to ask the beasts, and to be taught of the beasts, is only in a serious and holy manner, to let out our hearts in Meditation; and every true conclusion derived from such a Meditation, is the voice and answer of the creature.

Docebit te, i. e. unusquisque ex bestiis docebit te; cum nominis plurali adiungitur verbum singularis numeri distributio fit eorum quæ nomine continetur. Musca perdit i. e. qualibet perdere sufficit.

There is one thing further observable in these words, *Ask the beasts and they shall teach thee.* The Original is in the singular number; *Ask the beasts, himself shall teach thee.* It is usual in Scripture to put a plural and a singular thus together; though it crosses Grammar, yet it improves Divinity. *Eccles. 10. 1. Dead Flies cause the Ointment of the Apothecary to stink;* the Hebrew Noun is plural, and the Verb of the singular number: The reason of this kind of speaking is to shew that any one of the number about which we speak, will produce the effect of which we speak; and so when he saith, *Dead Flies will corrupt*, it notes that any one or every particular dead flie among flies, is enough to corrupt the most precious Ointment. So when he saith *the beasts will teach*, putting beasts in the plural number to a Verb of the singular,

singular, it notes, that every particular beast, or every single creature is able to give instruction. And so the sense is stronger, Thou shalt not only be taught and instructed from the whole congregation and assembly of the creatures, or by laying them altogether in thy thoughts, but each one shall teach thee, every one by himself shall teach thee, the least as well as the greatest, the Mouse as well as the Elephant or the Lyon; the Shrimp as well as Leviathan; the Hysop on the wall, as well as the Cedar in Lebanon; the Grass of the field, as well as the Oake of Bashan. So many creatures as are in the world, so many Preachers there are in the world, of the power and goodness of God.

And the Fowls of the air, and they shall tell thee.

This Clause is of the same sense with the former. The word signifies any thing that flies in the air, all winged creatures, both the greater and the lesser: The Eagle or the Sparrow, the Ostrich or the Flie: Thou hast swarms of Teachers, All these can tell thee: Yea not only so, But

וְכָל הַבְּרִיָּוִת
suo ambitu
quicquid per
aerem volitans
includit.
Hinc
וְכָל הַבְּרִיָּוִת
pa'pera a ce-
leri motu.

Vers. 8. Speak to the Earth, and it shall teach thee.

The word imports a silent enquiry, or a studious Meditation upon, or about a thing: speak to it in thy heart and thoughts, or in thy deepest Meditations, as was explained before. There is a different Translation; Some render, not by a Verb, but by a Noun, and repeating the Verb, ask, out of the former direction, they give it thus, Ask every Slip or Sprig which grows in the Earth, and it shall teach thee: For the word *Shnab*, signifies a Branch or a Sprig, a Slip or a Plant, any thing that grows out of the earth. And so the sense is carried thus, Ask of the Beasts of the earth, ask of the Fowls of the air, yea ask of every Sprig or Slip or Plant of the earth, and that shall teach thee also. So that as Job before sent him to the Beasts and Fowls, so now he sends him to Trees and Plants, that they also may be his Teachers. And yet he hath not done, here are more Masters,

וְכָל הַיֵּשֶׁבֶת
Notat
quicquid è cor-
de vel ore e-
manat, medita-
tiones, collo-
quia, preces,
nec non apud
se meditationes
aliosq; affectus
mentales. Bold.
Virgultum ter-
ra. Pagn.
וְכָל הַיֵּשֶׁבֶת
Significat
quemlibet fru-
ticem arbuscu-
lum aut herbam.
Gen. 2. 5.

The Fishes of the sea shall declare unto thee.

The silence of Fishes is grown to a Proverb, As mute as a fish. How then can a fish declare? Fishes are so far from forming up words and sentences, that they cannot make a sound or the rudest noise; yet they have a speech, though they have no voice.

וְכָל הַיָּם
Piscis
Multiplicatus,
Inflar piscium
affectus sunt.

The Schollars of *Pythagoras* were enjoined silence for five or two years; here we have a sort of Tutors who are always silent. These say not much, while they say little; but they say much, though they can say nothing. A Fish is expressed by a word in the Hebrew, which signifies to multiply; and to increase as a Fish is an Hebraism for a great encrease (*Gen. 48. 16.*) The very multitude and encrease of Fishes, their huge shoals and innumerable numbers declare much to us.

I might insist largely upon these Teachers, and shew you how every creature hath a proper lesson for us, and what those lessons are, I will give but a touch.

If you ask the beasts, They will teach you to know and own God from whom you receive so much good, so many benefits. That lesson the Prophet calls the Jews to learn from the Oxe and the Ass, *Isa. 1. 3. The Oxe knoweth his owner, and the Ass his masters crib, but Israel doth not know.*

Go to the Fowls of the aire, and they will instruct you: 1. That God hath a care of his people, because he hath a care of them who are so much inferior to his people. Thus Christ supports our Faith, and scatters distracting cares (*Mat. 6. 26.*) Behold the Fowls of the air, for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into Barns, yet your heavenly Father feedeth them; are ye not much better than they? And as he takes care to feed them, so to preserve them, *A Sparrow falls not to the ground without the will of your Father, ye are of more value then many Sparrows;* therefore be not afraid at the approach of fear. Will not God take care of you who takes care of Sparrows? 2. The observation which the Fowls of the air make of their several seasons, teach us to keep time and season. The Prophet makes that use (*Jer. 8. 7.*) *The Stork in the Heaven knoweth her appointed times, and the Turtle, and the Crane, and the Swallow observe the time of their coming, but my people know not the judgment of the Lord.* When we see the Swallow coming in the Spring, and going away towards Winter; when we observe the Turtle and the Crane timing it so exactly, do they not teach us to know the time of Judgment, and the time of Mercy, when it is Winter, and when it is Spring, when it is warm, and when it is cold?

Look upon the earth, and learn, 1. The power of God bearing it up: It is marvellous, even miraculous, that the earth should hang upon nothing, that it should hang in the thin air, that

that it should hang there, where a tennis-ball, yea where a Fether will not stay without support. The earth hath nothing but the decree and power of God to bear it up. How doth this teach us the power of God, and the infinite strength of his decree! 2. The earth teacheth us what we are, and what we must be, *Dust thou art, and to dust thou shalt return.* Ask the earth and she will teach thee that thou art a brittle Creature: Ask the Grass of the earth and that will teach thee that thou art a withering Creature. *Isa. 40. 6. The voyce said, Cry, and he said, what shall I cry? All flesh is Grass, and all the goodness thereof as the flower of the field.* 3. The earth calls us to fruitfulness, when we are plowed, manured, and watered: and that they who often drinking in the Rain of Heavenly doctrine bring not forth Fruir, are near unto cursing, *Heb. 6.* Lastly, All the creatures teach us that special point which Job is upon, namely, *That the Tabernacles of Robbers prosper.*

For Job having said in the former verse, that the feet of the godly slide, or that they are trampled under foot, that Robbers are rich, and Oppressors prosper, he bids Zophar Ask the Beasts, the Fowls of the air, and the Fishes of the sea, whether it be not so or no. As if he had said, *Even Beasts and Birds teach us that it is thus among men: For are not the most innocent and harmless beasts torn, vexed, and devoured by the more cruel and stronger beasts. There is no desert in those, why they are advanced and prosper: Neither is there any fault at all in those, why they are destroyed and perish. The Fowls of the air teach this also; do you not see the greater preying upon the less: is not the innocent Dove gript in the talons of the ravening Vulture, and the poor Partridge by the Hawk? The sea gives us the same instruction, for there also the Sharks and Whales, &c. swallow whole shoals of smaller fishes. As there are beast-devouring beasts, and fish-eating fishes: So there are men devouring, men eating men: There are civil Canibals in every Kingdom of the World, whose Tabernacles are glutted with prosperity.*

Again, The beasts and birds, &c. will tell you that the Tabernacles of Robbers prosper, if you put them this other question, *In whose possession are most of you? who is your Master? Come to the flocks of Sheep, and to the herds of Cattel, and ask, whose are ye? They will answer, such a wicked man is our Master, a Robber is our owner, an Oppressor is Lord of all these Flocks and Herds. Ask the Fowls of the air and the Fishes of the sea, to whose tables are ye most*

ordinarily served up? who feeds upon you? The fishes will say, we are carried up to the great mens Tables, the Robbers and Oppressors of the Earth feed upon us; we scarce ever come to the poor mans Trencher, and but seldom (comparatively) to the good mans Trencher; the greatest store of us is spent out upon the wicked, the Tyrants of the earth glut themselves with us, we satisfy the lusts, fat the backs, and fill the bellies of Oppressors. Ask the earth for whom it sends forth Corn and Wine and Oyl, for whom she gives out her treasures of Gold and Silver, together with her rich materials for Ornament and Cloathing. The earth will tell you, most of my delicacies are swallowed down by Robbers; my silks and scarlets, my gems and precious stones, cloath and adorn the backs of Robbers: Thus pass through every species of the Creation, and all return this answer to the question in hand, *The Tabernacles of Robbers prosper*. Thus your thoughts may travel through all the creatures, and receive particular instruction from them. Zophar said, chap. 11. 7. *Canst thou by searching find out God?* Yea, saith Job, I can find him almost without searching, every thing I see shews me God. I need not go to the heights of Heaven, or the depths of the Sea, as if the knowledge of God were not to be had within the bounds of the visible Creature: whereas indeed every created form, informs us of the Creator; and every object we see, is as a Teacher to the ear. The Apostle James gives a Caution (chap. 3. 1.) *My Brethren be not many Masters*: Which we may understand either thus, be not Magisterial and Censorious (as if every one of you had many Masters in him) towards your brethren: or thus, let not every one take upon him to be a Teacher, or (as some) to be a whole university of Teachers. For as it is said, that *there are more Physicians than sick Persons*: Every man almost will venture to prescribe a Medicine. So we may say, there are more Masters than Schollars; There are more who think themselves able to teach, then who are convinced that they have need to learn. Thus the Apostle would not have us to be *many Masters*; Yet we see God hath provided us *many Masters*, even as many as there be Beasts in the field, or Birds in the air, as many as there be Trees and Grass growing upon the earth, and Fishes moving in the Sea.

Hence take these two Corollaries.

First, We who have had so many Teachers, that we might know God and glorifie him as God, shall have as many condemners if we do not.

Secondly,

Videbatur Zophar sapientiam extra fines rerum assestabilem collata.
Merc.

Secondly, If they shall be without excuse who know not God by the teaching of the creatures, how inexcusable will they be, who know him not in Christ, who is taught and preached every day?

But the points of holy Learning which Job especially intendeth, are expressed in the two next verses.

Vers. 9. Who knoweth not in all these, that the hand of the Lord hath wrought this? &c.

As if he had said, Though there are manifold Lessons to be learned from the Beasts, and from the Fowls, and from the Fishes, yet I call you in a special manner to learn that the hand of the Lord hath wrought this, and that all these things are in the hand of the Lord.

There are two points in these two verses which Job calls us to learn.

1. *The work of Creation, vers. 9.*

2. *The work of Preservation or Providence, vers. 10.*

The work of Creation. *Who knoweth not in all these, that the hand of the Lord hath wrought this?* And if the hand of the Lord hath wrought them all, then the hand of the Lord doth dispose them all too; which is the Argument he was upon.

Who knoweth not.

That is every one knoweth this, or every one may know from the works of the Lord, that the hand of the Lord hath wrought them.

That the hand of the Lord.

Why doth he say, *The hand of the Lord?* Was it not the word of the Lord that made the world? The Lord said, *Let there be Light, and let there be Earth, and let there be Seas, and let there be Grass,* and all things were so, how doth he say here, the hand of the Lord hath wrought them? I answer, the hand of the Lord, is no more than the word of the Lord; the hand of the Lord is the Power of the Lord, and the word of the Lord is the power of the Lord too: Only, here he saith that the hand of the Lord made them, to note, that the Lord made them immediately. *The hand of the Lord put to a work,* noteth his immediate work. *Who knows not that the hand of the Lord hath wrought these things?* that is, that the Lord without any help or assistance, hath

hath set up this mighty frame of Heaven and Earth, that he alone hath provided and prepared all those vessels, which furnish it for the use and accommodation of the sons of men.

Who knoweth not in all these?

That is in one as well as in another. The lowest as well as the highest works of God, shew that God wrought them. Some pieces and parts of the World, are more excellent than the rest, but there is enough in any one of them to speak out who made it.

Hence Note,

First, *God alone made the World.*

Creation had but one hand in it. The hand of the Lord hath wrought. Every work of providence hath the hand of God in it, and some the hand of God only. But in Creation the supreme cause was all the cause, that knows nothing either of subordinate causes or of instrumental. Some have asked, with what tools or instruments did God make the Heavens and the Earth? with what Ladders and Scaffolds did he build so many stories, and after set up the Roof over all? *Job* answers these fools, *Who knoweth not that the hand of the Lord hath wrought them?*

Secondly, *The Lord hath so made all, that the very things which he hath made, proclaim that he made them.*

Naturalis Theologia.

Socius negat naturaliter ex animadversâ mundi machinâ Dei existentiam & providentiam colligi. Sc. ut absurdum non sit esse mundum & negesse Deum & providentiam nempe quia præstantissimi Philosophi non agnoverant. Coc.

Who knoweth not in all these? or, from all these. Many works of providence are so done, that man cannot so much as be suspected to have done them. God doth like God; He needs not subscribe his name to his work, for *that his name is near, his wonderful works declare*, it must be said by way of affirmation, *This hath God wrought*; as well as by way of admiration, *What hath God wrought!* Now, if providence (wherein usually man acts with God) act so much above man, that the whole is ascribed to God: how much more doth Creation declare it self to be the sole work of God? *Who knoweth not in all these, that the hand of the Lord hath made them?*

But it may be objected, To understand that the world was made, is the work of Faith, How then do we know it from all these? or how do the creatures demonstrate their Creation? Saith not the Apostle, *Heb. 11. 3. Though Faith be understood that the Worlds were framed by the word of God so that things which are seen, were not made of things which do appear?* I answer,

Faith

Faith gives the highest understanding of these things, and there is somewhat of these things which we cannot understand but by Faith; yet the very creature doth demonstrate a Creation. A Christian knows in a higher way than a Philosopher, yet a Philosopher may know that by reason, which a Christian knows by Faith. A Believer is in a higher form, and hath a higher light than a Philosopher, though both learn the same lesson.

And this doth more convince, not only Atheists, who deny that there is a God, *Who hath wrought all these*; but those also who improves not the works of God: for though we give God the greatest glory when we understand by believing, yet we may understand this principle by reasoning. The Creature well viewed by a natural eye, tells the understanding, that a Divine power once created, and still ordereth all these things.

Hence thirdly observe, in reference both to Creation and Providence,

That the Lord doth not only the greater thing but the lesser.

Psal. 145. 6. Whatsoever is in Heaven, Earth or Sea, *He hath wrought them all.* When the Primitive Christians were under the heat of Persecution, they lived upon God under this Notion.

Act. 4. 24. *Thou art God which hast made Heaven and Earth and the Sea and all that in them is:* for hence it followes, that he takes care of all providence is as large as Creation. It was an ancient Heresie, that, but some of the creatures, or the best of them, were made by God, and that, the more troublesome and worst, were made by the Devil. To which purpose that story is famous, reported by *Austine*, in his first *Treatise upon John*, concerning a *Manichee* that argued with an Orthodox Christian against the Creation; who having perswaded him, that God never troubled himself to make little flies, upon that confession caused him to confess that he made not the Bee, the Locust, and smaller birds; having got this advantage, he leaves not his Sophistry, till he forced him to confess that God made neither the Ox, nor the Elephant, nor man himself. The truth is, if we do not give God glory in making the least of Creatures, we shall quickly be drawn to deny him glory in making the greatest. As it is in sinning, if we make not Conscience of committing the least sin (I do not say that if we commit a little sin, we shall presently commit a great one) but if we commit it out of this opinion that it is no great matter, if once we admit of a little sin upon the ground, it will

August. Tract. 1. in Joh.

Cum orthodoxus muscam dixisset a diabolo factam, compulsi fatentur eum Manichaeum ab eodem factam ap. m. locustam, lacertam quem bovem, Elephantem, hominem.

quickly bring the conscience to swallow the greatest. 'Tis so about the works of God, if we deny his power in the work of Creation, or his wisdom in the work of providence about the least creature, we shall quickly grow to a kind of Atheism, and deny or at least not hold forth with power the work of God in any of the creatures, or that *His hand hath wrought them all.*

Vers. 10. *In whose hand is the soul of every living thing, and the breath of all mankind.*

The hand which made all, keeps all that he hath made in his hand. The former verse holds out the Creation, and this the conservation of the world.

In whose hand.

The hand is put for power, and to be in the hand of God, is to be in the power of God.

Hence Observe,

The same power that made the World, preserveth the World.

When men have done their work, they put it out of their hands; we usually say, such a thing is in, or under my hand, that is, it is a doing, I am at work upon it; but as soon as we have done our work, we say, such a thing is out of my hand; that is, I have done with it: Man cannot hold his work always in his hand, but God doth. And there is a necessity that he should. The world would presently run out of its being, if it were not upheld by the same hand which at first gave it a being: when man sinned the world had ruined, if Christ (by whom all things were made, *Joh. 1.*) had not stepped in to be the stay and prop of it, *by him all things consist*, Col. 1. 17. *He upholdeth all things by the word of his power*, Heb. 1. 9. He is that powerful word which made all things, and he upholdeth all things by the word of his power; we owe the standing of the world as much to Christ as we do the Creation of it. *In whose hand*

Is the Soul of every living thing.

The Hebrew word signifies not only the soul of man, but of any creature that breatheth, or the breathing of any creature. And it is put for the whole composition, the body and the life. *Every living thing dyed*; So Moses speaks of the flood. God put their lives out of his hand into the hand of the merciless waters.

Yea

Si creatura a deo facta sunt manifestum est, quod in dei potestate sunt sicut artificata in manus artificis Aquin.

וְכָל

Anima qua vivit cum sensu et sensibili appetitu spiritus humanis qua vivit cum consilio voluntatis. Omnis anima est in manu dei, quia ut producta ab ipso habet conservari. Janf. in loc.

Yet not only men and Beasts, and Birds, &c. but Trees and Plants, the Grass in the Field, and the Flowers in your Gardens, live by the power of God: The Trees in Winter are as dead, their Leaves fall off, and their Fruit is gathered, the Fields are unclothed and naked: but when the Spring comes, Grass comes, Trees bud and bring forth fruit again, shall we ascribe this to the Sun? shall we go no further than the season for this? and say, the Spring is come, and therefore the Grass comes? No, *In his hand is the Soul of every living thing*: there is a life in the Grass, and it is of God that the Grass grows, that the trees blossom and bring forth. *In his hand is the Soul*

Of every living thing.

Sometimes the word is restrained to man, *Gen. 2.* Eve the first woman, was so called, because she was the Mother of all living, yet she was the Mother only of living man. Some take it so here, implying that the Lord who made all Souls, hath the Soul of man especially in his hand, but we need not restrain it thus; seeing the last clause of the verse speaks expressly of the care of God towards man: *In whose hand is the Soul of every living thing,*

And the breath of all mankind.

Or, *The spirit of all mans flesh*, So Mr. Broughton reads it; Breath and Spirit are often used promiscuously, and *Ruah* signifies both.

Here 'tis taken for the breath or breathing of man, which is but an act of life. *In whose hand is the breath of all mankind.* Daniel makes report to Belshazzar (*Dan. 5. 23.*) what God had done for his father Nebuchadnezzar, in what great glory he had set him up, &c. and then reproves him, *The God in whose hand thy breath is, and whose are all thy ways, hast thou not glorified.* The God in whose hand thy breath is, Belshazzar was a great Prince, the greatest Monarch at that time upon the earth, he commanded all, he had the breath of many in his hand, as Daniel there speaks of his father, whom he would be slew, and whom he would be kept alive, such was the power of that great Monarch; but then he minds him, that he was not Lord of his own life, *Thy breath is in the hand of God*, if God will, he can keep thee alive, and if God will he can take away thy life. It is true of God in the

רוח
Spiritus est flama seu respiratio universa carnis.

fullest extent. *Whom he will he slays, and whom he will he keeps alive.*

It is the comfort of our lives that our lives, are in the hand of God. *That which is in his hand, is in a safe hand.* It is not in the power of all the world to take away one life which God will keep. As the safety of the Soul in the state of grace lies in this, that it is in the hand of God, as Christ argues in the 10th. of *John*, *Ye are in my Fathers hand*, that is, your spiritual estate is in his hand, and *my Father which gave you unto me is greater than all, and no man is able to pluck you out of my Fathers hand.* Here is the safety of the Saints; and that's the privilege we have under the Covenant of grace by Christ, beyond what we had under the Covenant of works in *Adam*. Our spiritual life was then in our own hand, now it is in the hand of God. Here also in its proportion lies the safety of our natural life, it is in the hand of God, God hath not only taken the life of our souls into his own hand, but the life of our bodies too; he disposeth of lives as he pleaseth, he can say to one in a day of common Calamity, *Thou shalt have thy life for a prey*, and to another, *Thou shalt die by the Sword*, &c. What can we say in these times of death, when the breath hath gone out of many thousands; Why hath it not gone out of our bodies? No other account can be given but this, Our breath is in the hand of God; were it not so, the breath of many of us had not been in our bodies at this time.

Further, It should teach us to honour that God, in whose hand our breath is. *Daniel* checked *Belshazzar* because he failed in this, *The God in whose hand thy breath is, hast thou not honoured.* How careful are we to please those who have our estates in their hands: We respect him also very much in whose hand our health is: But if our life be in the hand of another (as sometimes it is) how do we study and strive to comply with the commands, yea with the very humours of such a man. Shall we not honour God in whose hand our breath is?

Lastly, If our breath be in the hand of God, it teacheth us, that the time of our death, and of the going forth of our breath, is set down and disposed by God. Sometimes a sickness endangers our life and threatens to stop our breath presently; but God saith, no, it shall not be. Sometimes outward violence invades us, but as *David* comforts himself, *Our times are in Gods hand*; And as none can take away life if He will continue it, so none can continue life, if

He

He will take it away. If God send for our breath (how unwilling so ever we are to part with it) it must come. One of the Ancients bespeaks a wicked man thus, *Thou hast thy breath in thy Nostrils; and thou art unwilling to let it go, but if God speak the word, thy breath will go.* Again (saith he) *When God shall reunite these two, thy body and thy breath, and cast both into Hell together, he will hold thy breath in thy body whether thou wilt or no;* Here is a double punishment, he will fetch thy breath out of thy body when thou wouldst keep it, and he will keep thy breath in thy body, when thou wouldst be separated from it. Thou shalt dye when thou wouldst live, and thou shalt live when thou woest death, and desirest to be dissolved, yet to be annihilated.

This also administers comfort to the Saints, that as when their breath goes forth, Gods hand leads it forth, so that hand of God will preserve their breath for ever. He gives them eternal life, and that is in his hand; *He can lengthen out life to all eternity in whose hand life is.* He that gives us a life of span long, can give us life Eternity-long.

Thus we have seen *Jobs* first argument from the Creatures, all which acknowledge God their Maker, God their Disposer, and Preserver; they have their being, and their well-being, together with the changes and continuance of both from him.

JOB Chap. 12. Vers. 11, 12, 13, & 14.

Doth not the ear try words? and the mouth taste his meat?

With the ancient is wisdom, and in length of dayes, understanding.

With him is wisdom and strength, he hath counsel and understanding.

Behold he breaketh down, and it cannot be built again: he shutteth up a man, and there can be no opening.

THE knot of Connection which ties these words to the former, lies so close, that many have been troubled to find it out.

Agitur de creatoris cognitione percipienda ex creaturis experimento rerum sensibilium, quae per illos duos sensus gustum videlicet & auditum significantur Aquin placet etiam. Sanct.

First, It is conceived by some, that Job having in the former verses, the 7th and 8th, called his friends to read the book of Nature; *Ask now the beasts and they shall teach thee, &c.* Turn over all the leaves of that great Volume, the world, and they will be instruction to thee. He now pursues the same point, and tells them that it would not be unprofitable for them, or lost labour, if they in pursuance of his counsel should set upon this study; *For the ear tryeth words, and the mouth tasteth his meat,* that is, every sense will give them information about its proper objects, and shew the peculiar end of its institution: he instanceth in two senses, Hearing and Tasting by a *Synechdoche*, for all the rest, as if he had said, *Each power and faculty with which the nature of man is endowed, will be a contributour towards the attainment of this knowledge; and declare that the wisdom and power of God is eminent and conspicuous in the creature.* And because old men have heard many words, and have tasted many meats, that is, have had long experience of things, therefore he addeth in the 12th verse, *With the ancient is wisdom, and in length of dayes, understanding,* they who have run the longest course in the world, and have seen the greatest variety of changes must needs know most of God, because every change holds forth somewhat of God.

Secondly, The Connection appears to others thus; as if Job would here again meet with that opinion which his friends (*Zophar* especially) had more than once insinuated, that the doctrine

doctrine which they were upon and had taught him, was a deep mystery, and very hard to be understood, that it was (which some now glory in, *Theologia cryptica*) *Divinity in the Mystery*. No, faith he, there is no such matter, the point you are upon is very plain and easie: you need not make so many preambles, as if it were all under a Vail, or within a Curtain of secrecy (as was hinted in the former Chapter) for the things are plain. As the ear tryeth words, and the mouth tasteth meat, so it is here, these things are as obvious as sensible objects to the senses; we may learn them by ordinary hearing, which is the use of the ear, and by common experience, which is imported by the taste.

Thirdly, That *Job* refers to his own doctrine, As if he had said, I have held forth my opinion concerning the dealings of God with just men. Add the truth I have maintained is as plain and easie to the understanding, as Sounds and Languages are to the ear, or as Meats unto the mouth. For as the understanding is to things rational and speculative, so are the senses to things external and sensitive, the Palate to Meats, and the Ear to Words.

Fourthly, That *Job* being about to lift up the Name of God, to speak out his Glory in the attributes of his power and wisdom; and that God by his absolute sovereignty over all Creatures; may afflict or prosper, do good or evil as he pleaseth; doth here preface or premise this general commendation of his wisdom, that God doth as exactly apprehend all that is done or spoken in the World, as the ear of a man tryeth the words of him that stands next him, whether they be true or false, for him or against him: or as the Palate tasteth meat, whether it be sweet or bitter, liking or loathsome; all the ways of the Children of men are before the Lord, he discerns the voyce of all their actions, and the language of every mans life: he knows whether their works be sweet or bitter, whether good or evil. The Psalmist speaks neer the language of this Interpretation, (Psal. 94. 9.) *He that planted the ear, shall he not hear? he that formed the eye, shall he not see?* God is elsewhere said to have eyes, which try good and bad, He is here spoken of as having ears discerning truth and falsehood. And his ears are so quick, that they take in the least whisper, the stillest voyce; there is not a word spoken, but the voyce is heard by God: *He hears our silence, as well as our speech, and can tell what we say, when we say nothing*.

Divina sapientia omnia quae loquuntur cogitantur aut fiunt ita cognoscit quasi illorum audiret voces, quod aurium est aut gustaret sapores quod saporum est Sancti sensus percipiunt sonos, sapores, &c. Nonne opprimit deum qui haec dicit misericordia esse. Coc.

thing. He hears the voyce of our thoughtss, our thoughts are as loud in the ears of God, as a Trumpet in our ears. God hears the voyce of our actions, though we utter no words, *The voyce of thy Brothers blood cryeth*, thou hast done a bloody deed, and that hath a voyce, a crying voyce (*Habbak. 2. 11.*) *The stone shall cry out of the wall*, the Lords ear hears the voyce of all creatures, even of those that cannot speak; he can do what he pleaseth, and he is a clear in all he doth, as the ear is in trying words, or the taste in discerning meats.

Every excellency in the Creature is in God by way of eminency. Doth the ear of man try words? then the ear of God doth much more? Doth the mouth of man taste meat? Much more doth the Lord taste men? Hence he sometime speaks distastfully of men, they are represented as a burthen to his stomack, and he is ready to spue them out.

*Socios taxat
quod non dili-
genter expend-
rent a se dista-
q d. vestrum
sane erat pur-
gatum aurem
differre non me
carpere, &c.
Merc.*

Further, The words seem to carry a reproof of the rash and inconsiderate judgment of *Jobs* friends about what had been spoken. This Exposition may be taken two ways. Either

1. In reference unto what *Job* had offered.

You have heard my judgment about the dispensations of God before, and i have spoken it a lce nd time, *That the Tabernacles of the wicked prosper, that many a godly man is as a dispised Lamp:* Now, *Doth not the ear try words? Doth not the mouth taste meats?* As if he had said, *You have not yet weighed nor considered what I have proposed, if you had, I should not have needed to come upon this point the second time; you have been rash in your judgments, your ears have not done their office, you have not pondered my speech no, the arguments and reasons which I have produced in confirmation of my opinion.*

Or secondly in reference to what *Jobs* friends had offered. As if he had said, *You have declared many things to me, and you think that I have taken no notice of them, but I assure you I have my ear bath as exactly tryed your words, as the Mouth or Palate of a man tasteth meats.*

Taking it thus, we may best read the words comparatively, (as we find them Chap. 34. 3.) *The ear tryeth words, as the mouth tasteth meat.* Thus the sense is most clear. Hearken diligently to my words, and then you may understand my meaning as distinctly as your taste doth what you eat.

The word which we translate try, signifies *exat* tryall, a perfect exploration. The ear is the chief instrument of the understanding the sense of discipline. Here Job speaks not only of the outward ear, but of the ear as it acts with the understanding, which not only hears the sound of words, or knows the English of them, but discerns the meaning and scope of them. This Job especially intendeth, when he saith, *The ear tryeth words.*

Observe,

The ear must do more than hear, in hearing it must try what it beareth. He puts that which is properly an act of the understanding upon the ear, which is but an outward sense, namely to try the truth or falshood of those things that are spoken. The Original word for an ear (represents us with this duty of the ear) being in the dual number signifies a pair of ballances, to note, that when we are hearing, we should be weighing; we should put every word into the scales as we receive it. *Doth not the ear try words?* When you have received a peece of gold you try it, and there is a double tryal, a tryal by the Touchstone, and a tryal by the Balance. Every one that doubteth will go to the Touchstone to try whether it be good metall or no, and he will go to his ballances and try whether it be weight or no. Thus when words are spoken they should be tried, tried by the touchstone and balance of the Sanctuary. An attentive ear, and a holy understanding will never put them among our treasures of knowledge or leading principles, till they have brought them to this tryal.

The point layes a just reproof upon those who hear many words, but try none. It is said of the Bereans (Act. 17.) that when an Apostle spake they tryed his words; they might have trusted Paul as soon as any man alive, that he would not put any false coin upon them, that he would not speak a word that wanted a grain of weight, yet their ears would try the words of Paul, though he spake by inspiration immediately from heaven, though he had an infallible Spirit. If this duty were observed, if hearers would try words, so many light pieces, light doctrines, which bear no weight in the ballance of the Sanctuary, would not be putted up, and put in among our treasures. Many make treasure of light and erroneous doctrine, of base coin, and counterfeit money: The reason is, Because the ear doth not try, the understanding and ear joyn not together, Psal. 62. 11. *God hath spoken once, and twice have I heard it;* that is, he heard it with his

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out-

תנן Probare
tentare, pe-
nitis explo-
rare, et dili-
genter expen-
dere.
Aurem non ex-
ternam tantum
intelligi s. d. et
internam i. e.
exatum judi-
cium quod ijs
qua audiuntur
est adhiben-
dum, merces
Aurium et
Sistrera idem
est nomen in
Hebraeo,
duas enim au-
res sunt ut
ut bilances
quibus expen-
duntur: qua an-
dimus.

outward ear, and he heard it with his underſtanding. He duly weighed what God ſpoke. Thus you muſt do if you will hear to purpoſe, be it who will that ſpeaks, hear it once, and hear it again; that is, hear it with a ſenſitive ear, and hear it with an inſelective ear, judge of it and try what it is. Our Saviour Chriſt cautions us to *take heed how we hear*, though to hear be a natural act, yet there is an artificial hearing, there is an heavenly art in it. *The ear muſt be taught by the Spirit to hear, or elſe it can never hear what the Spirit ſaith.*

Secondly, Obſerve,

No doctrine ought to be rejected untill it be tried.

As none ought to be received till it be tried, ſo none to be rejected; Job taxeth his friends, that they out of prejudice had caſt off what he had ſpoke. Doth not the ear try words? Why have you not done me that right, as to examine the things I have ſpoke, before you cenſure me? You ſlight and contemn me, as if I were a man diſtracted and out of my wits; as though my words were not worth the weighing. *It is as dangerous to reſuſe, as to receive what we have not examined.* For, however a doctrine may be worthy to be rejected which we do not try, yet we do not our duty to reject it before we have tried. As we ſay of a Judge, he that judges a man before he hears him, though poſſibly the ſentence which he paſſeth may be juſt, yet the judge is unjuſt; ſo it is in this caſe, if we reject a doctrine before trying, though poſſibly it be worthy to be rejected, yet we are worthy to be reprov'd for rejecting it. We erre in laying aſide an error, before we have found it to be an error. The beſt that can be ſaid of ſuch, is, that they have done well by accident. And as they need pardon who do evil, though they know it not, ſo they having nothing to boaſt of, who reſuſe that which is evil before they know it to be ſo. The Apoſtle gives that rule. (1 Theſ. 5. 21.) when he had ſaid, *Deſpiſe not prophecyings*, be diligent in attending the means; he adds, *Prove all things, and hold faſt that which is good.* As we muſt not reject or reſuſe to hear the Word, ſo we muſt not receive every word we hear, but try all things and hold faſt that which is good. Doth not the ear try words?

And the mouth taſte his meat.

The Hebrew is, *Doth not the palate taſte his meat?* There is a diſpute among Philoſophers what is the proper ſenſorium or inſtrument

ſtrument of taſting. Moſt give it to the whole *month*, ſome to the *palate*, others to the *tongue*, not a few to the tip of the *tongue*; there is a fifth opinion which aſcribes it to the *nerves* which diſſuſe themſelves quite through the *tongue*; a ſixth places it in the *throat*. Hence *Ariſtote* reports of *Philoxenus* an *Epicure*, *Ariſt. 1. 3 Lib cap. 10.* who wiſhed that he had a neck as long as a Crane, that he might the longer taſt the pleaſure, and take the more delight in his meat. Which way ſoever it is in nature, the Moral truth is the ſame, which you may take in this brief Note.

Every ſence hath a diſtinct office, the Ear is for hearing, the Mouth for taſting, the Eye for ſeeing, the Noſtrils for ſmelling; Thus the Lord hath made a Policy in the *body Natural*. The body of man is a kind of corporation, every officer ſtandeth in his place, and hath his duty. The comelineſs of the *body natural*, and the comelineſs of a *body Politique*, whether civil or ſpiritual, ſhines in the due diſcharge of each members office: every member needs the help of his neighbour member, and the operation of every member is to help a the whole; Thy eye ſees, the ear hears, the Mouth taſts, as a ſervant, and for the ſervice of the whole body.

*ut auris videret
meus laud m-
la ſententia
Druſ.*

There is yet another tranſlation (obſerved by *Chryſoſtome*) in ſome of the *Greek verſions*; where it is read thus, *The ear tryeth words; and the mind taſteth meats*. One letter added in the *Greek*, changes the ſignification from the *mouth* to the *mind*, taking it with that literal addition, theſe words are an explication of the former: As the ear tryeth words or ſounds, ſo the mind tryeth meats. What meats? *Truth is the meat of the mind, the nourishment of the underſtanding*. Hence the word of truth is often compared to things edible and potable, to meat and drink, to honey, and the honey comb. And the want of the word of truth is called a Famine by the Proſit. The ſoul ſtarves where the word of truth is not rightly divided, cut out, or carved to it. All the excellencies of God that are held forth in the word, are, the ſouls food, (*Pſal. 34. 8.*) *O taſt and ſee that the Lord is good*; what is it that taſteth how ſweet the Lord is? It is the mind working, meditating, and acting faith upon him. *Faith is the ſouls taſter*, faith is the mouth of the ſoul, which not only taſteth, but cheweth the promiſes and manifeſtations of God to his people, and ſo makes meat of them; *Meditation turns the promiſes into marrow*. *My ſoul* (ſaith *David*, *Plal. 63. 5, 6.*) *ſhall be ſatisfied*

Pompeius non gustaret illam philosophiam.
Cic. in Pison.
Gustare ejus sermonem volo.
Plaut in mo.
Rel. Añ. 6.

as with marrow and fatness, and my mouth shall praise thee with joyfull lips, when I remember thee upon my bed, and meditate on thee in the night watches. As there is all manner of riches, so all manner of dainties in the believing meditations of God: every promise is a dish, and all the promises are a royal feast to faith. Heathens have given this notion about the tast of words. *Cicero* in his Oration against *Piso*, saith, *Pompey* could not tast that Philosophy, He was a great Souldier, a man of action, and troubled not himself with sedentary studies, and bookish contemplations.

Judicare genu est ipsius sentire qui namque sentit judicat aliquo modo.
Arist. l. 2. de An.

And as there is a spiritual tast, so a spiritual hearing, or rather these are the same; to taste spiritually is to hear spiritually. It was the meat of *Christ* to do the will of him that sent him: It is meat to such as are Christs, to hear the will of God by those whom he sends, and the more they hear, the more wisdom they get, as followeth:

Verse 12. *With the ancient is wisdom, and in length of dayes understanding.*

כְּשֵׁימָם
 in decrepitiis.

With the ancient is wisdom. The sences are a door to the understanding, both acting together lay up treasures of knowledge, therefore with the *ancient is wisdom, and in length of dayes understanding.* The word which we translate *ancient*, signifies not the first, no nor the second (for the Hebrews reckon three) but the third and last step of Old age. The first, by their calculation begins at the year threescore, and extends to threescore and ten: when man is threescore, he enters (say they) the borders of old age, and while he is travelling to threescore and ten, he is in the first territory of Old age. The second reaches from threescore and ten to fourscore: He is an old man indeed who attains that reckoning, (*Psal. 90. 10.*) The third is, that whole space be it longer or shorter, that man lives beyond fourscore. And that is properly meant by the word used in this Text, *with the ancient is wisdom*, and the more ancient any are, the more wisdom they may be supposed to have.

Triplex senectus apud Hebraeos, decrepiti sunt anni senectus.

Not that every old, or every decrepit old man hath wisdom, some hath attained the last degree or step of old age, who have not attained the first degree of wisdom. They have walked in a vain shadow, and have learned nothing. But when he saith, *with the ancient is wisdom*, he means; First it is the duty of old men to shew forth wisdom. Secondly, Old men have had

a great opportunity to gather wisdom, a price hath been in their hands, though possibly they have not had hearts to make use of it. It is not running through a great many years, that makes men wise, *wisdom is a gift of God, not of time.* And as this doth not infer, that a old men are wise, so neither doth it infer, that none but old men are. Wisdom is not so with the ancient, as as it is could be no where else; Gray haire have not ingrossed that whole commodity, nor is it all given and granted to them. *Wisdom doth not alwaies lean on a staff, nor look through Spectacles. It doth not alwaies* (as some describe venerable old age) *goe upon three legs nor see with four eyes. Young men may have wisdom if God give it, and old men cannot have wisdom unlesse God give it.* Some young men have understood as much as the ancient, yea more than the ancient, as there will be a clearer occasion to shew at the thirty second Chapter, vers. 7, 8, 9. whither I refer the Reader, if God shall carry on this work so far by my hand.

Observe, at present,

First, *Old men should be wise men. With the ancient is wisdom.* Where should we go for wisdom but unto them? Some will not so much as suspect young men for much wisdom, but we have reason to look for it among the Ancients. The Apostle (1 Job. 2. 11, 12.) writ to Christians of all sorts and sizes, under the titles of little children, young men and fathers, and he gives a special reason of his dedication to either of them. *I write unto you little children, because your sins are forgiven. I write unto you young men, because you are strong, &c. I write unto you fathers, why? Because you have known him which was from the beginning.* He gives a reason suitable to old men, *I write unto you fathers, because you know him that was from the beginning.* As if he had said, wisdom and knowledge are amongst o'd men, amongst the fathers. I take it for granted, that you are knowing men, therefore I write unto you about these depths of knowledge, *With the ancient is wisdom.* The Apostle (Heb. 5. 12.) gives a severe reproof to those who *when for the time they ought to be teachers, yet had need that one teach them again which be the first principles of the Oracles of God.* *When for the time,* that is, they had a great deal of time, and therefore their proficiency in holy knowledge should have been great. And proportionably how much time every one hath had, such a talent he hath had, and he shall be reckoned

*Turpis & ri-
dicula res est
senex elemen-
tariis.*

with, as having had it, to get wisdom. Time in it self cannot advantage us, but time bringeth advantages with it for the compassing of the greatest undertakings, and for the perfecting of those who are most imperfect. Time is not an empty duration. God hath filled time with helps to eternity, and with means to know him the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent, which is eternal life. Woe to those that have not competently learned this great lesson, when for the time they ought to be teachers, &c. An old man ignorant is more childlike than a child. To see an old man in the first rudiments or primer of natural knowledge, is uncomely; but how dreadful is it to see an old man not able to read nor understand the primer of the Gospel, or the first principles of Religion; we have seen sad experiences of some who have lived under powerfull means; even till decrepit old age, even until this third degree of old age, and yet have not been in their A. B. C. of saving knowledg, being unable to spell or put two letters together in the things of God, or to make out any one conclusion understandingly about the necessities to salvation. It is bad enough when children and young men are ignorant, and foolish in the things of heaven; but with what tears should we lament it, when with the ancient there is no wisdom, nor understanding in length of dayes. Which crosseth the second part of of Jobs Assertion.

And in length of dayes understanding.

Both parts of the sentence have the same sence. *In length of dayes*, or in many dayes, that is, by the experiences which we get in length of dayes, understanding is improved and heightened. Experience is a great teacher. The Apostle tells us that every experience we have of God should teach us to hope in God. *Experience worketh hope* (Rom. 5.) *Experience also worketh knowledge.* Experience is a tedious Master, it keeps us long at School, but experience is a sure Master, and we may learn much by experience.

In length of dayes is understanding.

Observe upon the whole verse,

Old men are to be honoured, and their counsel to be respected. With them (probably) there is most wisdom, and therefore they deserve most respect. Hence the Scripture calleth us *often* to reverence gray haire, and that we should rise up to old men,

not that we are to adore, which is indeed to dote upon old age; it is doting to think that every thing muſt be true which an old man ſaith, or which the Fathers have aſſerted. But as it is the dotage of any man to credit any thing which an old man ſpeaks, or to pin our faith upon the opinion of the Ancients, ſo it is a ſin (beſides the incivility of it) to ſlight or undervalue what old age ſpeaks. Old men having enjoyed the like means that young men have, and having made improvement of the means which they have enjoyed, are to be looked upon with veneration, and their counſel is to be received with more reſpect than that of young men. What deſtroyed the Kingdom of Rehoboham? he followed the counſel of the young men, and would not follow the advice of the old Counſellors, who had been with his Father, and had long known the carriage of the Kingdom, and the way of government. He takes young mens counſel, and ſo overthroweth all. The ſame error and danger lies in ſpiritual, as well as in Temporal affairs. An ancient writer deſcribing the happineſs of a City, ſaith, *then a City is happy, when it uſeth the counſel of old men, and the ſtrength of young men*; when it hath the heads of ancient men, and the hands of young men; the one to give counſel and advice, the other, to act and execute; then a City or Commonwealth is like to be ſafe and flouriſh. Though we muſt not tie up our ſelves to the counſel of the ancient, nor eſteem all truth becauſe the ancients ſay ſo, truth is older than the eldeſt truth hath the grayeſt hair, the hoaryeſt head: And though if truth be ſpoken by a youth, you muſt reverence it, and reject error, though an old man be the patron; yet old men muſt have reverence in what they ſay, and deſerve preſeeminence in counſel.

*Maximè ſalva
eſt civitas ubi
conſilia ſenum
et numerum arma
obtinent. Plur.*

Job ſeems to apply this to his friends. You are men of years, therefore you ſurely have attained much underſtanding. You may well know what I have taught, and what I am now teaching, That God is transcendent in wiſdome, that his knowledge as well as his power is over all. You muſt needs know that God works myſteriouſly and ſecretly, that he works ſupremely and authoritatively, that he needs not give an account unto the children of men. *With the ancient is this wiſdome, and in length of dayes this underſtanding*; This is the wiſdome which I ſhall now demonſtrate.

Verſe 13. *That, with him is wiſdome and ſtrength, he hath counſel and underſtanding.*

With him. The Antecedent is not the ancient man ſpoken of before, with him wiſdome may be, but not ſtrength. Old men do probably increaſe in wiſdome, but they do certainly and unavoidably decreaſe in ſtrength. Here then we muſt look for another Antecedent diſtinct from the ancient man. *With him,* that is, *with God,* about whose providence and juſtice I have ſpoken, with him is wiſdome and ſtrength; as if he had ſaid, if men by hearing and taſting gather up much knowledge in a traſt of time, and length of daies; Then what treaſures of knowledge and wiſdome are there in God, who is the ancient of daies, and who is as old as eternity. *Job* argues from the leſſe to the greater, with God who is eternal, and inhabiteth eternity, there is wiſdome and ſtrength, and he hath counſel and underſtanding.

With him there is wiſdome and ſtrength.

*Ex ſapientia
& fortitudine
conſecit divi-
nam providen-
tiam eſſe omni-
bus paribus
perfectam.*

We met with both theſe attributes of God. Chap. 9. v. 4. *He is wiſe in heart, and mighty in ſtrength, who hath hardened himſelf againſt him and prospered?* Therefore I ſhall not ſay upon them here, only a word.

Fiſt, *God is infinitely wiſe and ſtrong.* He is wiſe to deſign, and ſtrong to effect.

Secondly, *They who want wiſdome muſt go to God for it.* *With him is wiſdome,* as if he had ſaid, You may gather wiſdome among the creatures, and from obſervation, but all wiſdome is laid up in God: Study alone will not make you wiſe, experiences alone will not make you wiſe, you muſt go to the Fountain of wiſdome; So the Apoſtle directs (1 ſam. 15.) *If any of you lack wiſdome let him ask of God, who giveth to all men liberally and upbraideth not, and it ſhall be given him.* And again, (v. 16.) *Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights; (Holy Wiſdome is not a vapour which turnes up from the earth, but an influence which falls from that light of heaven) with whom there is no variableneſs, nor ſhadow of turning.*

Some conceive that *Job* here answers the counſell of Balaam, (Chap. 8. v. 8.) *Enquire of the former age, and prepare thy ſelf to the ſearch of thy fathers, for we are but of yeſterday, &c.* I grant (ſaith

(saith he) we are to enquire of former ages, I am of your opinion too. that, with the ancient is wisdom; yet I do not expect to find all wisdom among the ancient. (their well hath not depth enough to yield these waters to all comers; or for all occasions) no, I must go to God; *With him is wisdom, and he hath counsel and understanding.* Though all the ancient men in the world, and ancient Councils, affirme that, which the word of God denies, we must not believe them, for *with him is wisdom.* In the 28 Chapter of this book, *vers. 12.* the question is put; *Where shall wisdom be found? and where is the place of understanding?* Where? All the creatures disclaim it, *The depth saith, it is not in me, and the sea saith, it is not with me.* Though we may gain wisdom by conversing with the creatures, yet there is no creature hath wisdom in his keeping, or at his disposing. That's the priviledge of God; *With him is wisdom. With him,* as with a Master, as with a Lord; His it is. *With him,* as with a dispenser, as with a Steward; He gives it out as he pleaseth, he bestowes it upon whom he will; all wisdom is Originally in him, and derivatively from him. (*Chap. 15. 8.*) *Hast thou heard the secret of God, and dost thou restrain wisdom to thy self?* As if he had said, Thou talkest as if thou hadst been of Gods council, or at least as if thou hadst learnt knowledge, not only from the mouth of men, but immediatly from the mouth of God himself.

Thirdly Observe,

That all the wisdom of man, compared with God is no wisdom. Our wisdom is foolishness compared with God. I ground it from the Text, thus. He had said before, *With the ancient is wisdom, and in length of daies understanding.* Now saith he, *With him is wisdom, and he hath counsel and understanding.* As if he had said, I told you of wisdom in old men, and of understanding in length of daies, but I assure you this wisdom is nothing to the wisdom I now speak of. He meanes not a wisdom different in kinde, for if there be true wisdom in old men, it is a drop of Gods ocean, a beam of the Father of lights. But the wisdom that is in God carries the name of wisdom from the wisdom that is in old men. As all the light of the Stars is but darkness compared to the light of the Sun; so there is wisdom with men, with old men especially, and there is wisdom with God: But the wisdom that is in God, who is the ancient of daies, extinguisheth and overcommeth all the wisdom

in men, though they be never ſo ancient. *With him is wiſedome and ſtrength.*

He hath counſel and underſtanding.

Here are four words uſed in reference to God: we had but two before in reference to old men, *wiſedome* and *underſtanding*. But with God there is *wiſedome*, *ſtrength*, *counſel*, and *underſtanding*, and though three of the four are uſed promiſcuouſly, yet as they ſtand here together we may give them a diſtinct ſenſe.

Underſtanding conſiſts in finding out ſecrets and myſteries, in diving to the bottom of truths. With God there is underſtanding, he finds out the moſt hidden myſteries, his name is the *Revealer of Secrets*.

Secondly, *Counſel* is properly that which fits means to the attaining of an end. When we have a buſineſs to do, we go to counſel, and Counſel is to provide ſutable means for the carrying on of ſuch a deſign, and the accompliſhing of our deſires.

Thirdly, *Wiſedome*, as it ſtands diſtinct from underſtanding and counſel, conſiſts in the due ordering of thoſe meanes which counſel hath found out. Thus underſtanding finds out the matter, counſel declares the means, and wiſdome manages and diſpoſeth all towards the attainment of the end. All theſe are in God.

And a fourth, which is *Strength* to execute and carry on the means (according to the dictates of underſtanding, counſel and wiſedome) home to the end. If a man be furniſhed with the greateſt measure of underſtanding to find out, of counſel to contrive, of wiſdome to diſpoſe, yet if he want an arm of ſtrength, what can he do? 'Tis true, wiſedome is better than weapons of war, yet what can wiſdom do without weapons of war? A good head is better than a ſtrong arm, yet what can a good head do without a ſtrong arm? But where wiſdom & weapons of war; & where a good head and a ſtrong arm joyn, what can they not do?

Job to demonſtrate the abſolute compleatneſs of God in all his adminiſtrations, ſhews all theſe meeting in God. Would you have underſtanding? it is in him, he can ſearch out deep things. Would you have counſel? He can direct you to the moſt proper means. *With him is counſel*. Would you have wiſedome? He can manage & order means to the beſt advantage. *He is the God only wiſe*. Would you have ſtrength? He can execute and bring to paſs effectually whatſoever he intendeth, his power is over all, and there

there is nothing too hard for him. Thus the glory of God is lifted up, not only above the actings, but above the thoughts of man.

Hence Observe.

God is compleat in all perfections. Among men excellencies are scattered, and lye divided; one hath depth of understanding, a second clearness for counsel, a third is enriched with treasures of wisdom, a fourth, is fortified with a hand of power. 'Tis rare when any two of these meet in one man, and he is a kind of miracle of men, in whom they all meet; though but in some low or languid degree. But in God they meet all, and continue always in the highest degree. Those things which single put honour and value upon man, concenter in God. Who would not seek unto and depend on God? Who would not have God his friend, in whom he hath all friends, and who is such a friend, that having him we need not care nor fear who is our enemy?

One God helping, is more than all men opposing. When word was brought to a great Carthaginian Commander in their war against the *Romans*, that the Enemy was very strong and numerous; He answer'd the trembling Intelligencer. *How many do you reckon me for?* Some men are of such vast wisdom, strength and courage, that one of them may be mustered for a whole Army of men. *How many then may we reckon God for,* who alone hath all that which all men have among them, who alone can do more, than all men combined together can? Men act their several parts in the scene of worldly affairs, but God acteth all parts. As he that rides post a long Journey, takes fresh horses to carry him through; one horse carries him the stage first, and there he is left: A second speeds him to another Stage, and there staves: In the same manner a third to a third. So it is in transacting any great business, one man will help you thus far, and another will carry you so far, and a third yet farther. One carryeth us as far as counsel and wisdom work, but he wants strength; another hath strength, but he wants faithfulness. But God carryes us through the whole journey of our works, he is never tried, nor can he be taken off. (*Isa. 40. 28.*) *The might of God fainteth not, neither is weary, and there is no searching of his understanding.* Yea, not only hath he this unweariedness in himself, but he communicates it to his, *the young men shall faint,* (that is, they that are strong, especially they that boast in their own strength) *but they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their*

Strength,

Strength,

strength, they shall mount up with wings as Eagles, they shall run and not be weary, and they shall walk and not faint. The Lord gives his much of himself, they shall act like God who trust in God.

Job having arrayed the Lord in all these excellencies, proceeds to illustrate what he had asserted by some special instances. As if he had said, lest any should think that I speak only general notions, I will give you particular proofs, which you who are old men have surely made out by your own Observation, and are able from experience to attest my discourse.

Verse 14. *Behold, he breaketh down, and it cannot be built again, he shutteth up a man, and there can be no opening.*

Here is an instance of the strength and power, yea of his wisdom and understanding; all these concur in one act of providence; though some one appear and be put forth more eminently. I will tell you (saith Job) what God doth: this God of whom I have spoken great things, doth great things; Yea, it is far easier for him to do great things, then for me to speak of them, for himself can as easily, and as speedily do them, as speak them. The Works which speak him great, are more then can be spoken; Of some I shall now speak.

Behold, he breaketh down, and it cannot be built again.

These words relate to the attribute of power. *With him is strength.* And they are more then a bare affirmation that God is strong; they prove that he is strongest, or that there is no strength a match for his: This the instance reacheth fully, *Behold, he breaketh down, and it cannot be built again.* No man, nor Angel is able to preserve, what God will overthrow, or to restore, what he hath once destroyed.

דבר
Prop: id d. leve-
venit, dissipav-
it.

Amplavalde
et vehemens
est illa signifi-
catio destruen-
di, ut etiam de-
notet Anathe-
matizare ex-
communicare.
Fin.

The word which we translate to *break down*, signifies an utter dissipation or dissolution, even the putting of a thing out of its being: Some interpret it by *Anathematizing, cursing, or excommunicating*, which imports the devoting both of things and persons to a total and perpetual ruine.

First, some understand Job speaking here of his own children and family which God had broken down, with a high and strong hand. Children are a living house; A son in the sacred language hath his name from building, because sons build or continue their fathers

fathers house. When Sarah prayed Abraham to go in unto Hagar, she said, *It may be I may obtain Children by her*: The Hebrew letter is, *It may be I may be builded by her*, Gen. 16. 2. Rachel invited Jacob to Bilhahs bed upon the same hopes, That I also (said she) may have Children, or be built by her, Gen. 30. 3. Now as when God gives Children he builds, so when he takes them away he breaks down. If the Lord break down thine, if he take away the Children which he hath given, who can restore them to us again? or repair that breach.

Secondly, others conceive he refers to those two ancient acts of Gods breaking providence, the overthrow of Babel and the destruction of Sodom, which were not builded again to that day.

Thirdly, we need not restrain his sence to any special City, or to his own family, expound him rather of the ruining of mans estate in general. If the Lord break down, and deface their worldly glory, who are most fairly built and raised up, who have strongest foundations, and firmest walls, who have highest towers, and the most aspiring pinacles: If he pull down an estate thus founded, thus raised, and break it to pieces, it shall certainly be broken, and that without remedy.

*Melius quadrat
ut in communis
dicatur, quic-
quid vult De-
us quacunque
ratione destruc-
re. Bol.*

Hence Observe,

First, *What God will do, he can do, and it shall be done*. He breaks down without asking any man leave, God doth not work by sufferance, but by authority. The whole world is his work, and he may make what work he will in the world. If he will work, who shall let it? (Isai. 43. 13.) if he will smite, who shall let it? He will not put up his sword at thy word, no nor for fear of thy power. If he give the word, Break down, down it shall. The word of God plants, and the word of God roots up, and it doth both irresistibly. If God will destroy persons or Kingdoms, there is no saving them. As none can pull down, what he sets up, so none can set up what he pulls down. If he saith, Let it lye in the dust, who shall raise it up again? The Prophet (Mal. 1. 4.) brings in Edom surveying the desolations which God had made upon his Territories. Edom began to reflect sadly upon his ruinous condition, *We are impoverished*, saith Edom: upon this Edom takes counsel, yea he resolves, *We will return and build the desolate places*. But what saith the Lord to Edom? (Do and you will) *They shall build, but I will throw down again*. As if he had said, *I once threw down, and made desolate the palaces of Edom,*

and if Edom will attempt to better his condition, and build again, I will again make deſolate: as faſt as Edom repaires, I will pull down. Man ſhall never make up the works which God hath ſlighted, till he hath leave for it from heaven. (Pſal. 28. 5.) Becauſe they regard not the works of the Lord, he ſhall deſtroy them, and not build them up, that is, he ſhall deſtroy them, & they ſhall not be built. For unleſs God himſelf will build what he hath deſtroyed, no man can, (Hoſ. 6. 1.) Let us return unto the Lord, for he hath torn, and he will heal us; If God make the wound, it is not in the ſkill or Chirurgery of man to give a plaſter: He hath ſmiten us, and he will bind us up, when you have got a wound from God, you cannot get your cure from the creature; man tears and God heals, man ſmites, and God binds us up; but if God tear and ſmite, he muſt bind up and heal, or elſe we can never be healed: our wound and our ſalve come from the ſame hand. When Jericho was deſtroyed, the Lord ſaid by Joſhua, Cursed be the man that raiſeth up and buildeth this City Jericho, he ſhall lay the foundation thereof in his firſt born, and in his youngſt ſon ſhall he ſet up the gates of it, (Joſh. 6. 26.) We find that for five hundred years none attempted to build this City, the curſe of God lay ſo heavy upon it; but after five hundred years, whether the man forgetting what was ſpoken, or preſuming that now after ſo long a time, God would forget what he had ſpoken and not make it good: One Hilé the Bethelite (as you may read 1 King 16. 34.) built it, but how? By building that, he pulled down himſelf, for ſaith the Text, He laid the foundation thereof in Abiram his firſt-born, and ſet up the gates thereof in his youngſt ſon Segub, according to the word of the Lord which he ſpoke by Joſhua the ſon of Nun. The meaning is this; when he laid the foundation of that City, the curſe of God fell upon him, and his eldeſt ſon died, God pul'd down the beſt part of his living houſe, his eldeſt ſon, and yet he would not be warned of the judgement of God, but went on to finiſh Jericho (for ſetting up the gates notes the accompliſhment of his work, as laying the foundation ſignifies the beginning of it) and what came of that? then the Lord ſlew his youngſt ſon, he ſet up the gates thereof in his youngſt ſon Segub, he built Jericho: but he could not deliver himſelf from the curſe; God did not ſay, this city ſhall never be built, but curſed be he that builds it, and this curſe ſhall be upon him, He ſhall lay the foundation thereof in his firſt born, and in his youngſt ſon ſhall he ſet

Set up the gates of it, and so it came to pass, the History fulfilled the Prophecy, and the work of providence gave Testimony to the truth of the word. This also is very remarkable in the story of Jerusalem, Christ threatned *Jerusalem* that it should be destroyed, and the Temple, that *there should not be left one stone upon another, that should not be thrown down.* The event answered this threat. The Romans ruined all, and were that abomination of desolation in the holy place. Yet in the time of Julian some had a design to build the Temple and restore *Jerusalem*: Yea that Apostate Julian on purpose to cross the words of Christ, & the counsel of God, of which he had heard, that *There should not be left one stone upon another*; therefore he (not out of any good will to the Jews, or out of any desire to have the Worship of God and the Temple restored, but only in spight and malice, to see whether he could cross the word of Christ, and reverse his curse) gave the Jews (like another Cyrus) ample commission and full liberty to go and build the Temple; in pursuance of which grant they gathered a vast store of materials; but when they began to work, the story saith, That God from Heaven by storm and tempest did so dismay and scatter them, that they were forced to give it over, and confess the hand of God was against them; he confounded those builders of the Temple as he did the builders of Babel, it is (in some cases) a dangerous attempt to build when the Lord hath pulled down, but it is (in all cases) an impossible attempt to build what God resolves shall continue down.

*Annianus
Marcel l. 23.
Hist. T. i. p. 11.
l. 6. c. 43.*

It is thus also with private men, some have had fair estates in the world, God puls them down, and breaks them to peeces. We use to say of a man that failes, *he is broke*; such will be trying to get up again, yet they cannot: some after breakings have had more than they had at first to set up with besides their stocks of experience; yea these men, besides their experience, have added more diligence in the use of all honest meanes, yet God will not let them build their estates again, he will not let them thrive in the world; 'Tis so also with the body: God puls down a mans health and strength, and then he goes from Physitian to Physitian, he asks every one he meets, what he may do to build up his body again? yet this man must carry a crazie body to the grave. *He breaketh down, it cannot be built again.*

That's the first Instance.

The second is, *He shutteth up a man, and there can be no opening.*

The

קכך

Ad via impedi-
mentum ad
carcerem ad
vinculum re-
ferri solet.

Concludere ut
nemo aperiat,
suprema pote-
statis & libera-
tionis admi-
nistratio est
symbolum est
Sancti.

Aperire, aliquid
significat la-
tum fortuna-
rum, contra-
clausum, mise-
rum & erum-
nosum.
Aperire voca-
tur ab operien-
do celo.

The word which we translate to shut up, notes any kind of block, impediment or hinderance laid in a mans way to stop his course; it is applied also to locking of a door, that none come out, or go in, to the shutting of the Heavens that it rain not, (2 Chron. 7. 17.) shutting and opening, notes acts of power, and so to shut that no man can open, or so to open that no man can shut, are acts of supream power. Hence the giving of a key hath been an ancient ceremony of investing men in places of authority and chief command, *he shutteth up a man, and there can be no opening*, that is, none till he pleaseth: God saith of *Eliakim* (Isa. 22. 22.) *The key of the house of David will I lay upon his shoulder, so he shall open and none shall shut, and he shall shut, and none shall open*; that is, he shall have the highest office in the Kings house; to shut and open, beares the same sence *with going out, and coming in before a people*, Numb. 27. 17. Christ, of whose Kingdom the house of David was a Type, is described by opening and shutting (Rev. 3. 7.) *These things saith he that openeth, and no man shutteth, and shutteth and no man openeth*; Christ hath all power in Heaven and Earth given into his hand, and therefore what his hand doth, no man can undoe. Now in his absence he puts this general power into the hand of the Church, to be exercised and administred by such Officers as himself hath appointed: Thus he applyes himself to *Peter*, after he had made that confession which is the Foundation of the Church (Mat. 16. 19.) *I will give to thee the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt binde on earth, shall be bound in Heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, shall be loosed in Heaven*, where though the words vary, yet the meaning is the same, and give us this assurance, that no power can rescind what is done in and by the Church according to the will of Christ in binding or in loosing. Further, *shutting up*, notes in general the putting of a man into a sad condition, whether in regard of civil or spiritual things, and opening imports deliverance and freedome from either.

Hence Observe,

There is no prevailing against God, or repealing any of his resolves. As when he breaketh, none can build, so when he shutteth up, none can open. *Balaam* confesseth (Numb. 23. 26.) *God hath blessed and I cannot reverse it, and where God hath cursed, who can reverse it!* If the Lord shut any door against us, or upon us, all the smiths on earth cannot make a key to open it. If God shut or lock

lock up the Heavens that it rain not, who can open them? *Elijah* comes in as if he had the keys of Heaven at his girdle, (*1 Kings 17. 1.*) *There shall be* (saith he) *neither dew nor rain these years but according to my word.* We find in the Epistle of *James* what the word was, *Elijah prayed that it might not rain, & it rained not on the earth, for the space of three years and six moneths. And Elijah prayed again, and the Heaven gave rain.* It was not an Imperative word, it was a petitionary word, that locked and unlocked the Heaven: none hath an Imperative word, a word of command to lock and unlock Heaven, but God himself, *Amos 3. 7.* *I caused it to rain upon one City, and caused it not to rain upon another City.* Again, If the Lord shut up the womb, there is no bringing forth, *Gen. 20. 18.* *the Lord had fast closed up all the wombs of the house of Abimelech.* If the Lord shut up the earth, it becomes as iron, and brings forth no fruit; if he shut a man up in sickness, in poverty, in disgrace, in trouble of spirit, there is no unbinding, no opening. *He hath concluded or shut up all under sin, that every mouth may be stopped,* *Rom 3. 19.* *He hath shut them all in unbelief, that he may have mercy upon all,* *Rom. 11. 32.* They are shut up as a company of prisoners in a dungeon, that they may receive, whatsoever they receive at the hand of mercy; for who can open for those men? who can unloose these Seals of unbelief, can mercy unloose them? As none could unloose the Seals of that Book wherein the mysteries of God were contained but only Christ, *Rev. 5. 5.* So none can open the Seals of sin which are upon the heart of an unbeliever, but Christ only: Christ who opened the Book, opens to our Souls, Christ who loosed the Seals, can loose us from our sins: Him God hath appointed to be the great *Opener* of prisons, and the *Deliverer* of those who are in bonds; If the Son make us free, we shall be free indeed, and until he make us free, we are slaves indeed, *Whom justice locks up, mercy lets out.* There is no opening either by the force, or by the desert of man, where God shutteth up. The evil Angels have so much power that they are called powers, yet they could never get out of prison. *They are reserved in everlasting chains under darkness to the judgement of the great day,* (*Jude v. 6.*) Their chains will never wear out, nor can they be filed off, whithersoever those wicked spirits go, they go in chains, like prisoners who are kept till the day of Session. The Apostle *Peter* (*1 Pet. 3. 19*) assures us as much of the spirits or souls of those

those evil men who lived in the days of *Noah*; These being cast into prison, could never break prison nor make an escape unto this day. Christ by his Spirit in the ministry of *Noah*, preached to them for the preventing of their imprisonment. He preached to them who are now in prison, that they might not have bin imprisoned. But see how sure a Gaule Hell is: those disobedient unbelievers who were cast into prison in *Noahs* time, were all fast there in the Apostle *Peters* time. There is no picking the lock of Hell gates, nor breaking through the walls of that fiery *Tophet*, *Abraham* in the parable (*Luk* 16.) assures the rich man in hell, that he could not come out of that place of torment, and that no comfort, not so much as a drop of comfort could be conveyed to that place (*v.* 26.) And besides all this (saith he) between us and you there is a great gulf fixed, so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot, neither can they pass to us that would come from thence. The man is convinced that he could not get out, and therefore desires that no friend of his might come in, but that *Lazarus* might be sent to testify to his five brethren, lest they should come into that place of torment. He knew well enough, if they were once there, they could come out no more. God will at last send his writ to the grave, to bring out the bodies of the wicked that are shut up there, and he will send a writ to hell, to bring out the spirits that are shut up there, that both together may receive sentence of eternal imprisonment and torment: God will shut them up, and there shall be no opening for ever.

JOB Chap. 12. Vers. 15, 16.

Behold, he withholdeth the waters, and they dry up; also he sendeth them out, and they overturn the earth.

With him is strength and wisdom: the deceived and the deceiver are his.

JOB proceedeth upon his former argument in giving instances to prove the great power and the unquestionable sovereignty of the Lord. In the former context we had an instance in civil affairs: *He breaketh down, and it cannot be built again; he shutteth up a man; and there can be no opening.* The acts of God are irreversible by man: Here he instanceth in natural things, *Behold, he withholdeth the waters, &c.* As God shutteth up men and they cannot get out, so he shutteth up and imprisoneth the waters, and they cannot get out. This also calleth up our attention and admiration, *Behold,*

He withholdeth.

The word signifies, First, to stop, or to stay a thing by strength, and fine force. Secondly, to stop or to stay a thing by authority or command. Thirdly, to stop a thing by entreaty or by prayer (2 Sam. 24. 21.) When David offered a sacrifice in the floore of Araunah, the text saith, *so the plague was staid:* there was a stay, a stop, a withholding of the Plague: David intreated the Lord, and the Lord at his intreaty gave that effect; he checked the malignity of the pestilence, and bid the destroying Angel sheath his sword. The same word is used (Num. 16. 48.) when the plague was begun among the people, *Aaron took a Censer and offered incense, and so the Plague was staid;* or withheld: the plague was marching on swiftly and furiously, but at the intercession of Aaron, God stopt its course, and bid it stand. This withholding, is sometimes applyed to the laws of men; Laws are as boundaries and limits, yea, laws are as bridles and bonds, as chains and fetters; to stay and restrain, to stop and withhold the sinful extravagancies and excursions of the flesh. I find it often applyed to the withholding of water. *If I (saith the Lord) shut up Heaven, that there be no rain,* (2 Chron. 7.

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Prohibuit cessare fecit.

13) then if ye pray, &c. God locks the clouds, and prayer is a key of Gods own making to open them. This word is also applied to the restraint of that other element, the stopping and shutting in of fire (*Jer. 20. 9.*) Fire and water are head-strong elements, *They are good servants, but ill Masters.* God puts a bridle upon the fire, a bridle upon the water. *He withholdeth.*

The waters.

What waters? It may be understood, First, of waters under or upon the earth, there are *subterranean channels* of water: Springs furnish rivers, rivers are *supraterranean channels*, earthen vessels, or rather vehicles and conveyances of water. He withholdeth the waters, he withholdeth the under-waters, he forbids those springs to feed the rivers, and then they are dried up. Secondly, it may be understood of the waters that are above (the Empire of the Lord reacheth both) waters hang in the clouds, there are seas of water above us; it is the mighty power of God which gives those *airy sponges* the clouds, a retentive faculty, for else they would soon dissolve and overwhelm us. And it is from the anger and judgements of God, that those *airy sponges* the clouds, are sometimes so closed up, that they yield no more water than Iron or Adamant. As he alwayes withholds the water from drowning the whole earth, so he sometimes withholds it from refreshing many parts of the earth, he forbids the clouds to distil a drop. Thirdly, it may be expounded of the waters of the sea, which feed the springs, as springs feed the rivers, (*Nab. 1. 4.*) *He rebuketh the Sea and maketh it dry, and dryeth up all the rivers.* Where the sea is dried, the rivers must. The sea is grandmother to the rivers. The Prophet *Zachary* speaks the same (*chap. 10. 11.*) He shall smite the waves of the Sea, & all the deeps of the rivers shall dry up. *Thus also he withholdeth the waters.*

And they dry up.

What dryeth up? The rivers dry up, when the waters of the sea are withholden, and the things that grow upon the earth dry up, when the waters of heaven are withholden, and when they are withholden very long, not only the fruits of the earth, but the rivers dry up too. In that great drought, (*1. King 17. 17.*)

Tha

The brooks dryed up becauſe there was no rain in the land : Again, (Job 1. 20.) The beaſts of the field cry alſo unto thee for the rivers of waters are dryed up, and the fire hath devoured the paſtures of the wilderneſs. The fire hath devoured, what fire? It was not ordinary elemental fire that burn'd the paſtures, the fire was the ſun, there being no rain to mollifie and mitigate his ſcorching beams, the ſun as a fire conſumed the paſtures of the wilderneſs. So here; *He withholdeth the waters and they dry up*, that is, the paſtures (as well as the rivers) together with all vegetables, that are nurſed and nourished by thoſe breſts of Heaven diſtilling upon them.

Further, *He withholdeth the waters and they dry up*; takes in the effect which follows, the withholding of the waters, and the dryneſs of the earth; namely, *barrenneſs, and famine*: and ſo the cauſe is put for the effect, and, he withholdeth the waters, is he cauſeth famine in a land: He withholdeth the waters, and, then corn, and graſs, trees, and plants dry up. That three years famine (2 Sam. 21.) was from an extraordinary drought, as is conceived: The fruit of a drought is famine; and the fruit of rain is abundance. Plenty deſcends from Heaven in ſhowres: God takes away the fruits of the earth by taking away that which ſhould nourish and feed the earth in bearing fruit.

q. d. Quando
vult poſſit cum
ſterilitat m
tum copioſam
rerum omnium
abundantiam
elargiri. Bold.

I ſhall but note two things from this briefly, referring the reader to the 13th. verſe of the 15th Chapter, where the power of God in ordering rain and waters is more fully opened.

Hence Obſerve,

First, *The waters are at Gods command, He withholdeth them.*

He withholdeth them as it were by a law, or he withholdeth them as with a bridle. *There ſhall not be dew nor rain theſe years, but according to my word, ſaith Eliſab (1 King. 17. 1.)* This ſpake he in the power of God, for he prayed, and then the rain or the waters were withholden. God complained of his vineyard, (Iſa. 5.) that he had beſtowed much coſt upon it, and yet had received little rent from it, unleſs ſuch as was paid in baſe coin, *He looked for Righteouſneſs, but beheld Oppreſſion, &c.* well ſaith the Lord, *Go to, I will tell you what I will do, I will do thus and thus, and beſides all this, I will command the clouds that they rain no rain upon it.* The power of God and his glory is wonderfully liſted up in this work of providence (Amos 4. 7.) *I have withholden the rain from you, when there were yet three moneths to the har-*

harvest, that is, in the time when the corn and the grass had most need of rain, *I withheld it, and I caused it* (saith he) *to rain up in one City; and caused it not to rain upon another City*: read *Jer. 5. 24. Jer. 10. 13. Joel 2. 23. Math. 5. 45. Act. 14. 17.* There is a piece of secret Atheism in some about this point; The heart may be sweetly moistened by the acknowledgements of God in the rain: But most stick too much in natural causes, and scarce look beyond the Almanack for the changes of the weather. We shall have rain (say they) at the change of the Moon, or when the wind turns. 'Tis true, that there is a natural reason, why at the change of the Moon, why at the change of the wind, there may be a change of the weather, yet God hath a power above the wind, and above the Moon; and therefore sometimes he lets the Moon change and change, yet no rain; and the wind blows from all the points of Heaven, and yet no rain: That we might not stick in second causes, God often acts beyond them, yea against them: And that we should not despise second causes, and the order in which God hath disposed the frame of nature, he often works with them, and by them. When natural causes produce their effects, God shews his bounty; and when natural causes cannot produce their effects, God shews his sovereignty, and teacheth man his duty. Hence the want of rain in an ordinary course, is put as an extraordinary occasion of prayer, and seeking God (*1 King 8. 35. Zech. 10. 1.*) *Ask ye of the Lord rain, in the time of the latter rain.* When rain comes not in the season of nature, we may shew much of grace in asking rain.

Secondly, Observe,

That natural causes being stopped, natural effects must cease.

There can be no natural effect without a natural cause; All such effects are miraculous; withhold the rain, and all dries up; there is a natural dependance between the fruitfulness of the earth and the rain. David in his last words, shewing how blessed, and how great a blessing a just and a godly King is: *He shall be* (saith he) *as the light of the morning when the sun riseth, even a morning without Clouds, as the tender grass springing out of the earth by clear shining after rain* (*2 Sam. 23. 4.*) Here he puts in all the natural causes. *He shall be as the tender grass springing out of the earth*: But what causeth the grass to spring out of the earth? There is first, the rain, to moisten; and secondly, the clear shining, to warm and draw out the seminal vertue of the earth.

earth. When the Lord threatens (*Deut. 28. 23.*) *I will make the Heavens over you as brass*; he presently adds, *and the earth under you shall be as iron*; if the Heavens be brass, the earth will be iron. We have this concatenation of causes elegantly set forth (*Hos. 2. 21, 22.*) *I will hear the Heavens* (saith God) *and they shall hear the earth, and the earth shall hear the corn and the wine, and the oyl, and they shall hear Jezreel.* Jezreel must have corn and wine, and oyl; corn & wine must be had from fertile earth, the earth cannot be fertile without benigne Heavens. the Heavens can shew no kindness to the earth, either by moistning showers, or quickning heat, without orders from God. Hence the heavens cry to God; and the earth to the heavens, and the corn to the earth, and Jezreel to the corn, that he may be fed. *If God withholdeth the waters of heaven, the earth dries up*; we are fed by the blessing of God upon second causes. Again,

He sendeth them out, and they overturn the earth.

This latter clause doth not hold out the mercy opposite to the judgment in the former, but it holds out a second judgment. For as there, *the withholding of the waters* was a judgment; so here, *the sending of them out* is a judgement too. When God withholdeth the waters over long; the earth cannot bear fruit, and when God sendeth out the waters overmuch, the fruit which the earth bears is stifeled and choaked. Waters are ordinarily sent to refresh and revive the earth, but here they are sent to overturn the earth.

He sendeth them.

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The word signifies the sending out of a messenger upon some command. Waters receive a commission to stay at home, and they receive a commission to go out in a way of judgment. God gives them a precept, a writ, *Go and overturn the earth*. He loosens their bonds, and enlargeth their borders, to punish those who will not be kept in bounds. *Moses* describing the deluge (to which *Job* here as some conceive alludes) saith, *All the fountains of the great deep were broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened* (*Gen. 7. 11.*) both the under-waters, and the upper-waters were till that day imprisoned and kept close by the decree of.

Si miserit aquas tanquam nuncium deferentes aut justionem Remergenda terra sibi demandatum. Pin.

of God. But then God broke open the priſon, and let out the waters, and we ſee what work they made in the world.

They overturned the earth.

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Eo vit muta-
vis ſubſtantiam
formam aut lo-
cum rei alicu-
jus.

The word notes a change both of place and ſtate; either of which, when they are great, are an overthrow or an overturning. But is not the earth too big to be overturned? and hath not God promiſed that he will never deſtroy the earth again by water? Beſides, the earth is rather overwhelmed, then overturned by the waters. To clear this, *The earth* may be taken three waies.

Fiſt, For ſome ſpecial tract or province of the earth, which the Lord may overturn, that is, ſpoil and deſace without breach of that promiſe, *Gen. 9. 11.* The bow in the clouds is a ſigne between God and the world, that he will never drown the world any more; this doth not hinder the overthrowing of great tracts and parts of the world by water.

Secondly, By the earth we may underſtand the inhabitants of any part of the earth, and the dwellings which they have raiſed for themſelves upon the earth. Theſe the waters are often ſent out to overturn, though the ſite and ſoil of the earth remain the ſame.

Thirdly, By the earth, we may underſtand the fruits of the earth, or the things which grow out of the earth. Thus God overturneth the earth, by ſending out immoderate rains and exceſſive ſhowers: When corn and graſs, when the vines and olives are deſtroyed, the earth (for that ſeaſon) is deſtroyed.

Hence Obſerve,

Fiſt, *The Lord can make any of the creatures mans ſcourge.*

He that made the whole world without any inſtrument, can make one part of the world an inſtrument to deſtroy another: He that ſet up the world without help, cannot want help to throw it down. He hath his fire-works and his water-works ready, *He ſendeth out the waters, and they overturn the earth.* We uſe to ſay, *fire and water have no mercy*; Water is a terrible element, though it is a uſeful and a comfortable element. I might bring you many ſtories, ancient and modern, of the wonderful effects of water. Pliny in his *natural hiſtory*, and Seneca, in his *natural queſtions*, give us ſundry inſtances of Towns and Countries, made deſolate by water.

Plin. lib. 2. cap.
50. & 92.
Nat. Hiſt.
Sen. lib. 6. Nat.
queſt. c. 23.

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The question is put (*Job. 38. 22.*) *Hast thou entred into the treasures of the snow ? Or hast thou seen the treasures of the hail ? which I have reserved, against when ? which I have reserved against the time of trouble, against the day of battel and warr ?* The Lord speaks here as some great Prince, who hath a magazine stored & filled with ammunition against a time of war. *Hast thou* (saith he) *entred into the treasures of the snow ?* Hast thou been in my magazine, and considered what stores I have laid up there against the day of battle and warre ? What day of battle and warre is this ? we may expound it either one or both of these wayes, First, Of some day of Gods special wrath and judgment upon a people, when no enemy appears but himself ; when he (as it were) in person makes warr upon them, and comes forth in battle against them : In such a day of battle as this, he brings out these treasures of wrath, the snow and the hail. God went to warre and battle against Egypt immediately ; and one of the first plagues was the hail, which destroyed the earth by killing the cattle, corne and fruits, *Exod. 9. 18.* God sent down showers of water made up into bullets, upon Egypt, such is hail. Secondly, We may understand it of a day when a war is made against his people ; for then he sometimes brings forth this ammunition out of his storehouses, he fires his great guns, and poures out volleys of shot from heaven upon the enemies of his people. We have a clear record, which gives God the glory of this truth (*Josh. 10. 11.*) When Joshua was engaged in battle with those uncircumcised nations, *The Lord cast down great stones from heaven upon them, and they dyed, they were more which dyed with hailstones, than they whom the children of Israel slew with the sword.* Thus whether we understand that text of the day of Gods immediate war against evil men, or, of the day when evil men war against the people of God : Both are evidences of his power, in sending *waters, hail, and snow, storm and tempests* (all which he hath at his command) *to overturn the earth.* Great Princes and States, send forth their Generals with command to overturn Cities, and destroy all that will not submit unto them ; God gives a charge to senseless and inanimate creatures to go forth and overturn the earth, and it is done.

Secondly, Observe,

That the very same creature which is a mercy to us, may be a great affliction, and a scourge to us.

K k

Water

Waters fatten, and waters destroy the earth. We pray in drought for rain and waters; the Lord can give us rain, until rain shall afflict as much as drought. There is no earthly thing but we may have too much of it. The excess of any creature is a judgment upon the creature. We may soon have too much fire, and too much water, too much heat and too much cold; as the want of these things troubles us, so likewise doth the glut of them: we depend upon God as much for the quantity and measure of outward mercies, as for the mercies themselves. See here a difference between the things of nature and the things of grace. We can never have too much of grace, nor too much of the spirit. *The more we have of these the better, and we are then best, when we have most.* A gracious heart grows up to glory, through the abundance of grace. *Be not drunk with wine wherein is excess,* (is the Apostles caution, (Eph. 5. 18.) *But be filled with the spirit.* We may drink wine quickly to excess, but we cannot be filled with the spirit to excess, there is no excess possible in that, and therefore the Apostle gives no caution about it. Take your fill of the spirit you cannot be overfill'd. The wine of the spirit doth not make us drunk, the more we drink of it the more sober we are. And the waters of the spirit do never drown us, the more and the oftener they fall upon us, or overflow us, the more fruitful we are. The waters of the spirit are never sent out to overturn the soul; the mightiest inundations of Grace, makes the heart mighty for God. Spiritual things in the least degree are a blessing, and the greater the degree is, the greater is the blessing. Hence that promise, *In the later dayes* (saith God) *I will pour out my spirit,* you shall not only have some drops, and still dews, but strong showrs, rivers and torrents flowing down from heaven, upon the dry and parched ground, upon the barren wilderness, to make it like Eden the garden of God; such rivers shall run into you, till you shall have rivers running from you. *He that believeth on me* (saith Christ, Job. 7. 38.) *out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water: This he spake of the spirit, which they that believe on him should receive.*

Verse 16. *With him is strength and wisdom, the deceived and the deceiver are his.*

The former instance was in the works of nature, now Job in-
 Ranceth in civil things; shewing the providence and power of
 God

God acting mightily in them: *With him is ſtrength and wiſdome.*

We had theſe words at the 13th verſe [*With him is wiſdome and ſtrength*] ſo we tranſlate in both. Why doth he (only two verſes put between) repeat the ſame thing again? He had ſaid, verſe 12. *With him is wiſdome and ſtrength*, here *with him is ſtrength and wiſdome*: Why doth he touch ſo often upon this ſtring?

Note from it, Firſt, *That all repetitions are not uſeleſs and vain.* Repetitions in Scripture have not only an elegancy in them, but a profitableneſs in them. That's one thing.

Secondly, From the matter, *With him is ſtrength and wiſdome*, (That's the point) It is no ſmall matter that he repeateth, and it teacheth us thus much, *That we need to bear often of, and meditate often upon, the power and wiſdome of God.* When we have learned that leſſon once well, we have learned a great many leſſons: When the heart is but aſſured and ſettled in this truth, and can make the inferences, and draw out the concluſions which flow from thoſe premiſes, we have profited very much in the knowledge of God.

But further, we may answer. The reaſon why Job repeateth what he had ſo lately aſſerted, may be this, becauſe he beginneth upon a new ſubject: And therefore, as he puts this preface [*with him is wiſdome and ſtrength*] to thoſe former inſtances, ſo now giving inſtances of an higher nature, he renews that doctrine, *with him is wiſdome and ſtrength*: He would have the thoughts of men cloſe fully with theſe attributes of God. As if he had ſaid, *I ſhall ſpeak to you of ſuch things as you will never believe, nor honour God in the manifeſtation of them, unleſs your hearts be very well ſettled upon this foundation, that with him is ſtrength and wiſdome.*

Hence obſerve,

That great truths muſt be aſſured, or led in with great thoughts of God.

As in prayer, when weighty petitions are made, we finde the Saints raiſing up their hearts, and beating up their ſpirits to high thoughts of God: ſo when any great doctrinal truths are laid before us, uſually there is ſomewhat prefaced about the greatneſs of God, which may cauſe us to reverence and adore ſuch truths. The Prophets, *Thus ſaith the Lord*, or, *Thus ſaith the Lord of hoſts*, was as if they had ſaid, We ſpeak his words, who is able to make them good.

Or lastly, *Job* speaks this only in a way of acclamation, as being lifted up and ravished with the meditation of Gods greatness, power, and wisdom. And therefore as he had said, so he saith it a second time, *with him is wisdom and strength*. He is the strong God, the wise God: This Rhetoricians call (*Epiphonema*) a raising up of the voice and spirit, in acclamation to the truth of that which is spoken. When the Apostle had exhorted the Saints to rejoyce, he adds, *and again I say rejoyce*: so here, did I say the Lord hath wisdom and strength? I will say it again, with him is wisdom, and strength.

But though the words in our translation are the same with the 13th verse, yet the Hebrew differs. In the 13th verse the

11) words are *Chochmah* and *Geburah*, but here, *Gboz* and *Tosiah*; which though they bear the same interpretation in the English, yet they have a greater force in the Original: For the former signifies not only irresistible strength, but excellency and dignity joyned with that strength: So that it imports a person clothed as much with dignity and honour, as with strength and power (*Psal. 29. 1.*) *Give unto the Lord glory and strength*; That is, give unto the Lord a strength which is glorious. Jerome translates this word often by *Imperium*, sometimes by *virtus*, nothing in both, an *Imperial Sovereignty* or *power*.

The later word signifies not only wisdom in general, but the highest and purest wisdom, the most sublimate and refined wisdom, *The very quintessence and spirit of wisdom*; Again, it signifies not only the *quintessence*, and *extract* of wisdom, but *being* and *existence*: As if he had said, *with him is being substance, permanency*: divers of the Rabbins translate so, and so doth Mr. Brington, *He hath the force and all that is*, all being is contracted and brought into God, *for he is the first being, and in him all things live, move, and have their being*. Now here is much more than we had at the 13th verse, *with him is force, and all that is*; that is, the being and subsistence of all creatures is contained in God. God is his own being, he is *self-being*, *self-existence*; and all existence or being is derived from him. This is the highest elogy of God. Thirdly, It signifies not only the first being, but the most excellent being, the being and subsistence (so some of the Rabbins render it) of the *high Priest*, of Kings and Emperours, a being in Sovereign authority; fix your thoughts upon the noblest subsistences, such, and infinitely more noble than such, is the subsistence

Epiphonemicus dictum, cum eo sane est robur & ratio. Merc.

Ita fortitudinem significat, ut etiam dignitatem, præstantiam, bonorem & excellentiam connotet. Hieronymus vertit imperium sape, virtus. 70 Honor regius.

כלה

Omne ens. Ramb.

Omnium rerum vis et robur, quo fit ut sint & esse perseverent id quod sunt ab illo est. Beza.

Tuscijab denotat subsistentiam eminentissimam qualis est dignitas regalis

sistence of God. With God is *being*, with him is the most glorious being, all the excellent beings, that are scattered through the world, are summ'd up, and united in God, yea they are all but so many streams, and beams issuing from this *everflowing fountain and glorious Sun of being*. Fourthly, This word signifies also the rule, or the certain law of wisdom and judgment: Not only that wisdom which acts in man, but the rule by which that wisdom acts. The reason of government, or the measure by which all things are to be governed, lies in the bosome of this word. Here also another shining truth breaks forth from under the clouds of this exprellion; *With him is such wisdom as is the rule and measure of all things which are done in wisdom*. Job being to speak of great things God, that *the deceiver and deceived are his, that he looseth the bonds of Kings, &c.* had but need to put this preface to it, *with God is the measure, the reason of all things*.

Significat certan legem & rationem ad quam omnia exiguntur. Mer. Cum ipso est Tuscijah & lux perpetua movens omnia secundum voluntatem suam Antevertemem. Rab. Abra. Peril.

Robore quidem valet, sed inveterum etiam certa lege & ratione ac aequitatis formula omnia gubernat.

Prima justitia & juris Origine est optima & sanctissima Dei voluntas partim quia ipse optimus & sanctissimus est partim quia illi jus habet in omnia; quippe qui ipsius sunt Coc...

Thus we have found these words in the Original, far more fruitful and extensive in sence, than those used for strength and wisdom at the 13th verse.

From the last intepretation, take this Note, *That the will of God, or God himself, is the rule of all things*.

God hath not a rule without him, but within him, it is himself. In this he differs from the best of men: Man hath a rule, but the rule is one thing, and the man is another; the law is one thing, and the King is another: But God and his rule are the same, his will and his law are himself, this renders him excellent in dignity, *The Lord over all. Tyrants make their will their law*, but what is their will? Their will is crooked, a leaden, Lesbian rule, which turneth and changeth, and will fashion it self to any occasion or immergency: their wills are distorted and turned this way and that way, even every way. And therefore it must needs produce tyranny for a man to make his will his rule, because his will hath not an everlasting rectitude and straitness in it. But the Lord makes his will a law, and there is no tyranny, nothing but justice and equity in it. It is impossible for any law to be made so strait as the will of God is, it is impossible to give a rule so holy as Gods will is. If we could have a supream Magistrate whose will were as holy, just, and good, as any law: It were reason his will should be the law: But this cannot be; therefore it is the prerogative of God alone, whose will is (as we have described) the Original of justice, and so more than a

law, which is but the measure of justice. *The counsels of God are without consultation, his decrees without deliberation: he hath all wisdom without study or experience; all knowledge and evidence of things without discoursing upon premises, or drawing down conclusions.* And whence is this? but because with him is this certain rule which cannot erre. The Pope challengeth to himself, that, though he may erre in his private actions as he is a man, yet as he is (*in Cathedra*) seated in the Apostolick Chair, as he is the Visible head of the Church, he cannot erre; his will is the rule: we see what rule it is; by the rules which it hath given. Who can say that is clean which brings forth an unclean thing, or strait and true, which brings forth that which is crooked and erroneous? Sinful actions speak sinful men, and his actions have been sinful enough to speak him (what is written of him) *The man of sin.* The actions of God have been so holy, that they declare him, *The holy God,* and his wayes so wise and just that they proclaim his wisdom to be the unerring rule of justice. *With him is strength and wisdom.*

Job having thus premised the unsearchable wisdom and insuperable strength of God, giveth a reproof of both in the next words,

The deceived and the deceiver are his.

The deceived, is passive. A man misled through ignorance or inadvertency; *The deceiver, is active,* he consults and plots to catch the simple in his snare: Yet the word may signify also to seduce ignorantly, for as all are deceived through ignorance (he is not deceived who knows that he is) so some deceive through ignorance; supposing they give good counsel, and hold out the truth, when they are wapt up in, and blinded with the darkness of error. And though most deceivers deceive knowingly, & intend to do the evil which they doe, yet ignorance causeth some to deceive, and did they know better they would not do so bad. But under what notion soever any man is deceived, or becomes a deceiver, the text entitles them both to God

The deceived, and the deceiver are his.

I shall open two things about it.

1. Who are the deceived and the deceiver.
2. In what sence they are said to *be his*, that is, the Lords. There are some who by the *deceiver*, understand the devil.

who

וְנִי

Ignoravit

וְנִי

In Hiphil erravit f. cit.

*Ex Hebrais
multi per faci-
entem errare
satanam nimis
acerte intelli-
gunt.*

who is indeed *the great deceiver* and impoſtor: He wrote the firſt deceit in the world, and to deceive is his continual trade in the world. Men do but uſe deceit in their Trades and tranſactions, but the Devils trade and all his tranſactions are deceit. Yet we muſt not reſtrain and narrow up this Scripture to him only. God conſidereth that *great deceiver*, and all that are deceived by him. But *Job* diſcourſeth of men not of Devils, and then the deceivers and the deceived are of two ſorts.

1. In matters of Religion, or in ſpiritual things.

2. In matters of the world, or in civil things.

In matters of Religion, there is much deceiving, and many are deceived: Chriſt foretels it will be ſo (*Matth. 24. 24.*). *There ſhall ariſe falſe Chriſts, and falſe Prophets, and ſhall ſhew great ſignes and wonders, in ſo much that (if it were poſſible) they ſhall deceive the very Eleſt.* But though it be impoſſible for them to deceive the Eleſt, yet their attempt ſhall not be without too much ſucceſs. For, *Take heed* (ſaith Chriſt to his diſciples, Verſ. 4, 5.) *that no man deceive you for many ſhall come in my name, ſaying, I am Chriſt, and ſhall deceive many.* Their deceits ſhall proſper. *Paul* (*Tit. 1. 10.*) ſpeaks of deceivers who ſubvert whole houſes: Not by outward violence, but by cunning craftineſs, they overthrow their faith, and turn them from the truth: thus they deceived whole families.

Secondly, There is *The deceiver and the deceived* in civil things or in matters of the world. And theſe are of two ſorts.

1. In commerce and trading: Thus we read (*Prov. 11. 1.*) *of the falſe balance which is an abomination to the Lord.* And the Prophet *Micah* brings in the Lord diſdaining at theſe deceivers (*chap. 6. 11.*) *Shall I count them pure with the wicked ballances, and with the bag of deceitful weights? For the rich men thereof are full of violence, and the inhabitants thereof have ſpoken lies* (he means Exchange-lies, Warehouse-lies, Shop-lies, the lies of the ſeller, or of the buyer) *and their tongue is deceitful in their mouth.*

*Non ſolum
hæc quæ loqui-
tur Iſr, de
Iuſto & deſuſu
intellexerim
ſed de omnibus
erroribus tum
in politiâ &
civitatibus re-
gendis, tum in
domo, &c.
Meic.*

2. In matters of government and policy, about which the great-
eſt deceits, and juggling, have been exerciſed in all the ages of the
world. What crafty counſellours ſuggeſt, ſimple plain-hearted
men are taken with, and often miſſed to their own deſtruction.
In *Absaloms* rebellion there went two hundred men out of *Jeruſalem*
that were called, and they went in their ſimplicity, and they
knew

knew not any thing, namely, of *Absaloms* intent of aspiring to his fathers throne: *They were meerly caught*, and ſurprized with his wilely inſinuations. Politicians are ſkil'd to put fair vizards upon ſoul faces, and cover their wicked deſignes with honeſt pretences. Theſe are *ſtate-ſophiſters*, their ſtudy is to put fallacies and cheats upon the common people. All theſe deceivers, and they who are deceived by them, are comprehended under this general affirmation, *The deceived and the deceiver are his.*

How his?

87 The Hebrew is rendred, or rather paraphraſed three waies. 1.

*Eius vel ei vel
ab eo eſt errans
ſed errare faci-
ens. Meic.*

They are of him. 2. *To him.* 3. *From him.* We tranſlate, *they are his*, and that may include all three. Yea there is a *five-fold his*, which I may hint to clear this point.

First, *His* by creation.

Secondly, *His* by poſſeſſion.

Thirdly, *His* for uſe and ſervice.

Fourthly, *His* by way of dominion or diſpoſal.

Laſtly, *His* by way of ſpecial affection and appropriation.

The two former of theſe are too little for the point: For, to ſay *the deceived and the deceiver are his*, by creation, is indeed to ſay nothing peculiar to this point: for ſo is the earth, and the ſea, and the ſtorms, and the winds, every thing is his, they are all *Go* is creatures. And ſecondly, to ſay *they are his by way of poſſeſſion*, that he is the Lord and propriator of them, this alſo is too little, for ſo (*Pſal 50.*) *All the beaſts of the foreſts are his, and the cattle upon a thouſand hills.* To ſay no more of this deceiver, and the deceived, then you may ſay of the beaſts of the field, or of the fowles of the air, or of the fiſhes in the ſea, that the Lord is the maker and poſſeſſour of them, is below the purpoſe of *Job*, and the honour of God. And as theſe two are not enough, ſo the 5th way of being *his*, is too much, for *they are not his* by way of ſpecial affection and appropriation. That's to great a privilege for the deceiver and the deceived: for ſo only (among men) the Saints are his. Theſe are Gods peculiars, and beloved ones, as he ſpeakes of his people *Iſrael*, to *Moses*, *Exod. 19. 5.* *Now therefore if ye will obey my voice and keep my covenant, then ye ſhall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people, for all the earth is mine.* And though it be poſſible for many that are deceived, and for ſome who deceive at preſent, to be his, even in this way of ſpecial appropriation; yet this were too

high

high a sense to give this text; therefore we shall take the *his* in the third and fourth senses. *They are his*, that is, *his* to use, or he makes use of them: and *they are his* to dispose, that is, he disposeth and ordereth; both the deceiver and the deceived to his own righteous ends and holy purposes.

Both which may be more fully demonstrated, by these following interpretations.

First, *He knoweth them*: so the vulgar reads it, *he knoweth* *ipse novit* vul. *the deceiver*, or the deceiver is known to him; and so also is the deceived: as if he had said: *The Lord is acquainted with the deceiver, though he thinks that he walks in a mist, or is wrapt up in a cloud, though he flatter himself that no eye sees him; yet whether he be a deceiver in matters of Religion, or in matters of trade and state-policy; God knows what he is, he whose seven eyes run through the whole earth, sees him thorowly.* For when it is said that the Lord knows the deceiver, it is not meant only thus, that he knows his name or person, *there goes a deceiver, there's a false heart, there's a head full of errors and rotten principles*, but the Lord knoweth with what artifices and fetches, with what devices and projects, by what waies and engines, he compasseth and carrieth on the trade of deceiving. He knows also by what misrepresentations, false glosses, and semblances of truth, the deceived have been intrapt and drawn into the snare. To do this, is one of the highest acts of wisdom. To discern how, and wherein another had been deceived, shews as much soundness of understanding, as not to be deceived. Any fool commits or runs into error, only a wise man finds it out, *Eccles. 1. 17. I gave my heart to know wisdom, and to know madness and folly. Solomon studied as much to know folly, as to know wisdom.* Only truth discovers falsehood, and right the wrong.

Novet quã arte quo astu fallit decipiens, cuius rei ignorantia vel inanimadvertentia falsa proferitur errans quod non nisi per sapientiam fieri potest. Merit.

Secondly, *The deceiver and the deceived are his*, sounds thus much, *That God will make them both to be accountable unto himself.* A master saith to his steward or servant, You shall give me an account of these actions and expences; so saith God to the deceiver; and the deceived, you shall answer for what you have done; you that deceive, shall be sure to pay for it; and you that are deceived shall not escape a tryal and a censure, for your carelessness and your folly: you should have look'd better to it, 'twas your duty to prove all things, and to hold fast that which was good. Some are deceived in civil things, and are blameless;

It is their affliction to be deceived, not their ſin : but there is no man that is deceived in ſpiritual things, and is blameleſs, there it is every mans ſin not to know his duty, and not to try before he approves. The ſame word in the Greek ſignifies both to prove, and to approve ; implying that no man ought to approve any thing before he hath proved it. It is no honour to a man to approve that which is true, before he proves it : but he that approves an error before he hath any proof of it, runs himſelf into a double ſin : Firſt, of being deceived : Secondly, of not ſo much as conſidering whether he were or no. But which way ſoever a man is deceived, whether through ignorance or idleneſs, whether becauſe he could not find the truth when he ſearcht for it, or becauſe he would not be at the coſt and pains to ſearch for it, whether it were this or that by which he is deceived, God will reckon with him about it, much more then will he reckon with deceivers, whether they have deceived ſimply, or upon deſigne, though theſe laſt ſhall be deepeſt in condemnation. God will arraign all impoſters and cheaters, all mountebancks and corrupters of truth, whether in ſpirituals or in civils ; *They are all his*, and they ſhall ſtand before him to receive according to their deeds of darkneſs and deceit.

Thirdly, *The deceiver and the deceived are his*, that is (as ſome underſtand it) he permits and ſuffers deceiving and deceit to be in the world. It is from his ſufferance that there are any ſuch ; This is a truth, though not all the truth ; The Lord doth not will any deceit, yet there can be no deceit whether he will or no, it is poſſible, yea very eaſie for him to hinder both the deceiver and the deceived, but he is not obliged to do it, neither is he pleaſed to do it : he doth not alwayes give check to deceivers, nor doth he at all times ſet a bar in their way ; He alwayes hinders error morally, by declaring againſt it ; but he doth not alwayes hinder it powerfully and effectually by acting againſt it. Thus the deceiver and the deceived are his by permiſſion, but this is not all, they are more his then thus. For,

Fourthly, *The deceiver and the deceived are ſaid to be his*, becauſe he ordereth, and diſpoſeth them, he ſendeth out deceivers, and giveth men up to be deceived. He is active in this diſpenſation, yet free from the leaſt touch of pollution. He is not the author of the deceit, though he be the orderer and diſpoſer of it. Mr. Calvin gives his judgement upon the place to this effect, roundly

*Neq; permiſſio
tantum Domini
hoc Scriptura
tribuit, ſed qui-
dam putant, qui
ſapientiores ſpi-
ritu ſancto vi-
deri volunt.
Merc.
Job vult indi-
care divina
providentia fi-
eri, quod qui-
dam errant,
quidam vero
alios decipiant,
& in errores
inducant.*

roundly and clearly. *To say (saith he) that God doth only permit men to deceive, and to be deceived, is a very cold expression, and speaks little, yea it is a derogation to the honour of God; for the Lord in infinite wisdom and holiness, disposeth of the errors of men, and of those that lead them into error.*

There are four things, in which the providence of God moves to the ordering of this disorderly work of man.

1. He orders the persons, who shall deceive, and who shall be deceived; Hence it is said (*Mat. 24.*) that the false prophets, and the false Christs, arising in the later times, *should (if it were possible) deceive the very elect.* Then the elect are persons exempt; deceivers may distemper them, but they shall never payson them.

2. When or what time any shall deceive or be deceived is also ordered by God. We read that satan was bound for a thousand years, *that he should not deceive the nations* (*Rev. 20.*) It was God that bound him, satan must be in a chain of divine providence a thousand years, *and after that he must be loosed a little season.* He that bound him loosed him, and as he bound him that he should not deceive, so he loosed him to deceive the Nations. But how doth satan deceive? Not immediately by himself; the devil doth not come above-board (as we speak) he doth not walk in his own likeness, and appear as he is, that would terrifie men, rather then deceive them; but he acts by transforming himself into an angel of light. He stirreth up the spirits of men, to deceive, as he stirreth them up to vex and persecute those who will not be deceived; as the Devil is said to cast those witnesses of the truth into prison, who are imprisoned by men at his instigation (*Rev. 2. 10.*) so he is said to deceive and lead those into error, who are misled by men at his instigation. It was the Devil who filled the heart of *Ananias*, to vent a verbal lye; and the Devil fills the hearts of deceivers to vent and maintain doctrinal lies. The times of these deceivers are in the hand of God; he hath set down the term when they shall begin, and how long they shall continue their ensnaring Trade.

3. God orders how far any man shall deceive, or to what degree his deceit shall prevail. Hence the Apostle speaking of deceivers, *men of corrupt mindes, reprobate concerning the faith,* concludes, *but they shall proceed no further* (*2 Tim. 3. 9.*) as the maliciousness, so the deceivableness of men would know no

bounds, if God did not bound it. But because he doth, therefore though they would, yet they shall proceed no further. No man can do good till God assists him, and no man shall do hurt when God will stop him.

Thus far the Lord is active in ordering the deceiver, and the deceived. That Scripture is clear for it (1 King. 22. 22.) *Ahab was deceived, and the false prophets deceived him; Whence was it? The deceivers and the deceived were under the hand of God. Micajah spake it out plainly, as Ahab had desired (1 King. 22. 19, 20.) I saw the Lord sitting upon his Throne, &c. And the Lord said, who shall persuade Ahab, that he may go up and fall at Ramoth-Gilead? &c. And there came forth a spirit and stood before the Lord, and said, I will persuade him. And the Lord said, thou shalt persuade him, and prevail also; go forth, and do so. Now therefore (saith the Prophet) the Lord hath put a lying spirit in the mouth of all these thy Prophets. The Lord hath done it: He was active in it, yet full of holiness and truth in himself, as well as of justice and wrath against Ahab. Because Ahab hated the true Prophet, therefore he is given up to the teaching of false Prophets. Here was more than a bare suffering: God, as a Judge, put a lying spirit, as his Executioner, into the mouths of those lying Prophets: They who like not plain-dealing, are justly flattered into destruction. The Apostle speaking of that gross deception under which the Jews then lay, and still lye to this day; ascribes it to God by Scripture Authority, According as it is written, God hath given them the spirit of slumber; eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear unto this day (Rom. 1. 18.) And the Lord takes it upon himself in down right words (Ezek. 14. 9.) If the Prophet be deceived when he hath spoken a thing, I the Lord have deceived that Prophet. Not that the Lord did instill or infuse error into the Prophet, he is the God of truth, he is the author of truth, and therefore cannot be the author of error; he is the revenger of error; and therefore also he cannot be the abetter of it. Yet the Lord saith, I have deceived him. Observe (saith Calvin) God sinks not into a corner, saying I permitted it, and suffered it, I drew a curtain between me and the world, and let men do what they pleased. No, but he standeth in the open light, and saith, I have deceived that Prophet. The man of sin is prophesied coming with all deceivable-
ableness of unrighteousness, in them that perish, because they re-
ceived*

ceived not the love of the truth : For this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lye. The delusion is of their deserving, but of Gods sending : They deserve it because they never loved the truth, and God sends it because he ever loveth justice.

And as he sends these *spiritual delusions*, so he likewise sends *politic delusions*. When a people are deceived and led away from the wholesome rules of government; when they have *State tricks* put upon them : We may conclude as the Prophet doth, *when Egypt was seduced* (Isa. 19. 14.) *The Lord hath mingled a perverse spirit in the midst thereof, and they have caused Egypt to erre in every work thereof.* Nations through the just judgement of God, run into error after error, and stagger like a drunken man in his vomit, till they fall into the pit, and into the snare of some utter desolation.

Further, *The deceiver and the deceived are his*; that is, the Lord improves both, to serve his own ends, to bring about his counsels, and promote his glory. We think nothing serves the ends of God, but the publication of truth; yes, the publishing and spreading of errors serve his ends too, and bring his purposes to pass. Carnal reason startles at this, and cannot make it out. But go into the sanctuary, and learn what this meaneth :

remember *Jobs* preface, *With him is strength and wisdom*, and you will be satisfied. The preface makes the doctrine easie : and who is not convinced that there is infinite wisdom, and a strait rule in him, who can regulate the irregularity and crookedness, the errors and absurdities of man? Who can find out the depth of his wisdom, who is able to make such improvements out of folly, and give an advantage to truth, by the breaking out of falsity? Doth not the glory of God shine bright in this? The question is put by *Augustine*, in his 22. book of the *City of God*. Why doth not God remove and sweep sin and error out of the world? He answers, *It is better, and an act of greater power to make good out of evil, then not to suffer evil to be* : As it is one of the highest acts of grace in man, to render good for evil : so it is one of the highest acts of power in God to draw good out of evil. We may well conclude, *wisdom and strength are his*, whom the craft and skill of men to deceive, cannot circumvent, and whom the silliness and folly of men in being deceived cannot disappoint. In how clear a light doth God dwell, yea how clear a light is God, who makes

his

*Hinc patet quod
quod ipsum est
sapientia
Nam qui super-
rior est omni
calliditate hu-
mana, atque pro-
videntiam ha-
bet deceptionum
et errorum non
potest esse nisi
infinitè sapiens.
Pined.
Potentius et
melius est de
malis etiam be-
nefacere, quam
mala esse non
sinere. August.*

his way without one wry ſtep through all the miſts & darkneſs of this world ? It argues an infinite ſoveraignty in God, that he doth his work by that which ſeems to work againſt him. Deceivers do the work of God, though they intend nothing but their own.

For firſt, God would have his people tried, and he tries them by thoſe who attempt to deceive them, (*Deut. 13. 1, 2.*) *There ariſe among you a Prophet, that ſpeaks unto thee, ſaying, let us go after other Gods, &c. Thou ſhalt not hearken unto the words of that Prophet, for the Lord your God proveth you.* Here is the account which God gives, why he lets deceivers go abroad, and take their ſcope among his people. *It is to prove his people.* The Apoſtle gives the ſame reaſon (*1 Cor. 11. 19.*) *For there muſt be alſo heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifeſt among you.* It would never appear either what falſe principles corrupt the hearts and underſtandings of men, or what truth and ſincerity are lodged there, if the Lord did not let out deceivers and falſe Prophets, to open their packs of lies in their fight or hearing.

Secondly, God would have us, not only hold truth, but be zealous for the truth, and contend earneſtly for the faith which was once delivered to the Saints. He therefore ſends out ſome to oppoſe it. Some are buſied in ſpreading deceits, that we may learn to be more buſie in withſtanding them, or more watchful in avoyding them. When we hear that there are *Cut-purſes* in a crowd, every man looks to his purſe; ſo when we hear that deceivers and impoſtors are in the Church, and that they come with ſuch an effectualneſs of deceit, that if it were poſſible they ſhould deceive the very elect, this muſt needs awaken all to look to themſelves; will you not try what ye receive, when ye hear there are deceivers, and teachers of falſe doctrine are abroad, as well as teachers of the truth? and that there are *blinde guides*, as well as *Seers* gon forth? If nothing but truth could poſſibly be offered, our care and pains to prove what is offered might be ſpared: Neither would it be needful for us to pray unto Chriſt (the great Prophet) to keep us in his truth, but only to give us faith to receive, and wills to obey h's truth. But ſeeing there are deceivers abroad, ſhall we not examine before we receive? ſhall we not weigh and try all in the balance of the Sanctuary, by the touchſtone of the word ere we believe it.

If any a k, Why are so many misled into error, and poisoned with unwholesome doctrine? why doth not God preserve, and antidote all places against these infections? The Prophet Ezekiel hints us an answer (*chap. 14. v. 7.*) God punisheth one sin with another. When men continue in sins of practice, God lets them fall into sinful opinions. He justly blinds their eyes against his truth, who harden their hearts against his fear; *and put the stumbling block of their iniquity before their faces.* A second reason is given by the Apostle (*2 Thes. 2.*) He had said, *vers. 11. God shall send them strong delusion*, the reason follows, *it is, because they received not the love of the truth.* The understanding may submit, while the affections stand out. It is easier to receive truth, then to receive the love of the truth. And how much truth soever we receive without love to it, leaves us still under the wrath of God. The wrath of God is visible in his judgments, and this is judgement in perfection, *to be given up to strong delusions.* Those are the sorest punishments which are made of sins. They are punished with the belief of error, who love not truth. *False doctrines are fit plagues for false hearts.* And as they shall be beaten with many stripes; who know their Masters will and do it not, so also shall they who know it, and love it not; and indeed these and the former are the same. The reason why any doth not what he knows, is because he doth not love it, and he that loves it, will do it, for love is the fulfilling of the commandment.

By all it appears, how the *deceiver and the deceived are Gods.* Mr. Bronghton hath put the summe of these several interpretations into his translation. *By him, and from him, and for him, are deceivers and deceived.* From him, that is, he sendeth them. By him, that is, he suffers and orders them. For him, that is they promote his glory, and serve his ends, either to try and discover who are faithful, or to punish those who are false.

Take one note by way of inference from the whole. *If the deceiver and the deceived are the Lords, then surely they who lead others into truth, and they that are led into truth, are his much more.* Truth-teachers, and truths receivers, y^e, as, in the bosom of God, and are his by special approbation; They are to him as the apple of his eye, as his precious jewels. They are his scholars; he teacheth them; he teacheth those that teach truth, and they who learn truth are taught of him. The Lord feeds them with

with knowledge and understanding. *He maketh them to lye down in green pastures* (of sound doctrine) *he leadeth them beside the still waters* of spiritual consolation. *He will open the gates of salvation, to a righteous nation who love the truth* (Isa. 26. 1.) They are his, and none shall pluck them out of his hands; they shall not be left, either to the cunning craftiness of deceivers, or to the rough violence of oppressours. And though such as publish and receive the truth may suffer for it, yet they shall never loose by it. *Truth is such a commodity as never broke the buyer, what ever it cost him.*

JOB Chap. 12. Vers. 17, 18, &c.

He leadeth Counsellours away spoiled, and maketh the Judges fools.

He looseth the bonds of Kings, and girdeth their loins with a girdle, &c.

JOB insisteth upon his former argument, to illustrate the power and wisdom of God. He had done it in natural things at the 15th verse, *He withholdeth the waters, and they dry up.* He did it in civil and spiritual things, at the 16th verse, *The deceived and deceiver are his.* In this context he enumerates more distinctly, the several sorts and degrees of men, whom the Lord by the wonderful administrations of his power and wisdom, sets up or casts down.

In the former verse we heard of deceivers in Religion, and of deceivers in policy: of *Church-deceivers*, and of *State-deceivers*. The instances given here are about the latter: we may call them *State-hereticks*, deceiving, or being deceived in the ministry of justice, to Kingdoms and Common wealths. And because the intent of *Job* is to shew the mutations of States and Kingdoms; therefore he speaks of those who are the chief supporters, the most eminent pillars of States and Kingdoms. Of these he names, 1. *Counsellors*. 2. *Judges*. 3. *Kings*; in whose miscarriages whole Kingdoms miscarry.

*Verfibus hinc
quing; describi-
tur Monarchici
status Lab. fa-
stidiat; ever-
fo, Mert.*

It is here observable in general, that *Job* being to describe the providences of God in the world, doth not meddle with small matters, as what God doth to a private person, or single families; but he deals in those which are most eminent, the transmutations of Kingdoms, which fall within the observation of the whole world. If a particular man be undone or ruined, his next Neighbour takes notice of it, but it is scarce known in the next village; But when Kingdoms are ruined, all States and Kingdoms ring of it, such events are the talk and wonder of the Nations round about.

Affert rara & extraordinaria qua Deus facit, ut his tremendis operibus & judicijs veterum a nobis excutiat. Meic.

Secondly, He doth not instance in the founding and establishing of Kingdoms; wherein yet the wisdom and power of God are very glorious; but in their destruction and putting down. And the reason is, because we take greater notice of God in pulling down, than we do in building up; we observe him more when he killeth, than when he maketh alive; his withdrawals are more noted than his presence, and we are more sensible of our privations, than of our enjoyments. The Sun is more looked at in an Eclipse, than when it shineth with purest lustre.

Further, He giveth instance in these, because we are apt to cast the miscarriages of Kingdoms upon second causes. It was the pride of such, the envy of others, the ambition of a third sort, or the unfaithfulness of a fourth, which undid all; we seldom look up to the hand of God, while we complain so much of men. In all changes here below, *Job* carrieth our thoughts directly to God, *He leadeth Counsellors away spoiled*: Do not stay enquiring how weakly Counsellors advised, or how foolishly Judges gave their sentence, it is God that doth all these things, *He leadeth Counsellors away spoiled, and maketh the judges fools, &c.* More distinctly,

He leadeth.

The Hebrew is, *he makes them go*, he makes them go whether they will or no: he leadeth them from the height of their dignity, into a despised condition. No man hath any mind to such a motion.

מליך

Ire faciens.

עץ

Consulere, discernere, d. librare. Consiliarius est qui sibi ipsi vel aliis dat rationem agendi.

Counsellors.

Counsellors (as the word is ordinarily taken) are such as give advice in publike affairs; *They chaunk out the way for action;*

M m

that's

that's the proper work of Counsel; Counsel is to lay the designe, and to cut out the means, how businesses are to be carried, how to be managed, then others are called to execute. *Counsel tables order the affairs of the whole world*: they give the rule, and draw the method, they appoint the instruments and set the time how all shall be done. A Counsellor is like the Pilate at the Helm, steering the vessels course (*Prov. 11 14.*) *Where no counsel is the people fall, but in the multitude of Counsellors there is safety.* Hence when Job would set forth the destruction of a people, he tells us that God leadeth Counsellors

Away spoiled.

Ἰδὲ αὖ βελ-
τὰς αἰχ-
μαλώτους.
Sept.
Ducit consul-
tores captivos.

The Hebrew is variously interpreted. The Septuagint saith, *He leadeth them away as captives.* Then the sense riseth thus, That the Lord takes the wise Counsellors of the earth, as Prisoners in War; when they in their counsels and designs have set themselves against his Throne and Kingdome, when they have been devising devices against his people; then the Lord comes out with his Army, conquers them, and leads them captive. When Christ ascended up on high (*Psal. 68. 18.*) *He led captivity captive*, or, *He captivated captivity*; that is, he led those captive who had captivated his people, or he led his people, who were miserable captives to Satan, into a blessed captivity, to himself. And as he led *captivity captive*, so he can *lead liberty captive*, making those who enjoyed the greatest liberty, even Counsellours themselves, his captives.

There are three ways in which this leading Counsellours spoiled and captivated may be understood.

De gradu dig-
nitatis deiecit.
Deus.

First, *Spoil of their honour and reputation.* It is as easie as it is usual with the Lord, to spoil those of honour in the World, whose their counsels and their power against those whom he honours. It is as great an affliction to call them out of the hearts of men, (especially of good men) as out of their estates. *The hand of God is in nothing more visible then in making them a detestation among men, who were the delight of men.* Honour is one of the richest spoils that can be taken from any man, especially from Counsellours; who always do as much with their reputation, as with their reason, and can do nothing with all their reason, when once they have lost their reputation.

Secondly, *He leadeth them away spoiled of their hopes and expectations,*

prestations, spoiled of the booty and of the prey which they designed to themselves; they thought of rich advantages by spoiling others, but they are led away spoiled. To which sense the words are well expounded, *He doth cast the wise men of this world from their wished end*: They who presumed and promised themselves great spoils, become a spoil. *Eliphaz* treateth at large of this point (*Chap. 5. 12.*) *He disappointeth the devices of the crafty, so that their hand cannot perform their enterprise.*

*Sapientes huius
seculi operto fi-
ne deiciuntur.*

Thirdly, These Councillours are often spoiled, not only of their honour and credit, of their ends and hopes; but also of their wits and wisdom. They whose wits and wisdom continue as high and quick as ever, may yet be disappointed in their counsels, and loose both their ends and honour: But the Lord doth sometimes spoil the wise of wisdom, and knowing men of understanding. The Hebrew Doctors delight most in this Interpretation, *He preyeth upon the wisdom of the wise*; they think themselves able to outreach and outpolicy all the world: Yet God blasts their gifts, and darkens their understandings, he puts them out of their wits, and makes their judgments injudicious. He gives them up (as he did those Gentiles, who waxed vain in their Imaginations, *Rom. 1. 28.*) *To a reprobate mind*, to an unjudging, or an unapproving spirit. They who knowingly put darkness for light, and light for darkness, evil for good and good for evil, wrong for right, and right for wrong, shall do it at last for want of knowledge. *They who act against their light, shall not have light to act by.* And as some Counsellours are thus spoiled for a punishment to themselves, so not a few were spoiled that they may be a punishment to others. For this cause they are disabled to resolve what is safe for a people, and what is unsafe, what may be for their uniting, or what for their dividing, what for the settling, or what for the disturbing of affairs. (*Psal. 75. 5.*) *The stout hearted are spoiled*; so we read, but some translate, *They are spoiled of their stout heart*: The stout hearted the strong are spoiled; the strong man may be spoiled by a stronger: that's a good sense, but it is more elegantly rendred, *They are spoiled of their stout heart*, that is, the Lord takes their heart out of their bosom. Daring men, who fearing nothing, are turned into *Magor-missibis*, fear round about; their stout hearts are taken from them; and then, they are so far from being a terror to other men, that they run from the shadow of a man: Their courage is

*Hebraei spolia-
tos mente &
judicio expri-
munt. Meica.*

*Adducit sapi-
entes in pra-
dam scientia:
i. e. eorum sapi-
entiam quasi
pradam &
spolia diripiunt.
Rab. Moysi.*

*Spoliati sunt
fortes corde.
q. d. privati a-
nimo animosi-
tate & fortitu-
dine.*

down, they cannot give a Child a confident look, much less look dangers or enemies in the face. Now, as the Lord spoils Souldiers and Warriours of their stout hearts, so he spoileth Counsellors of their cunning and politick hearts, of their wise hearts. *The politick hearts are spoiled, or they are spoiled of their politick hearts.* Rabbi Moses (as was noted) readeth this Text so, *He bringeth wise men into a spoil of their wisdom*, that is, he takes their wisdom as a prey: and as a man that is spoiled, is sent away without a penny in his Purse, or a Garment upon his back, so these wise Counsellors are sent away without any wit in their heads, or prudence in their breasts. One of the Greek Translations, (both the Hebrews and the Greeks joyne in this sence) gives it thus, *He leadeth away Counsellors to uncounselableness*, or he leadeth them away (saith another) *into Penury or Poverty of counsel*, they have not so much as a penny worth of counsel about them, if one should come to ask it of them. The Vulgar Latine comes near this sence, rendering thus, *He leadeth the Counsellors into a foolish end*, or, *into a foolish conclusion of their business*; that is, he brings their counsels to such an end, that they shall be accounted fools and unwise men, by all men of wisdom.

Ἰδὲ γὰρ βέλτε-
ραις ἐν ἀβελ-
λίᾳ. Symach.

Adducit ut
pradam. Tyg.

These three ways we may understand this Text, that God *leadeth Counsellors away spoiled*. All which are wrapped up in a fourth, he brings them into straits and difficulties, like captives in Chains, and so drags them after the Chariot of his triumphing Providence, drawn by *his own infinite wisdom and strength*. And thus they become a spectacle of scorn or pity to all beholders.

Further, Consider that these Counsellors may be of two sorts. First, Such as give evil counsel against a Kingdom or State, these are usually led away spoiled of their honour, and of their hopes, of their ends, yea and of their wits. Secondly, Such as give good counsel, and that with all their might and the best of their understanding, yet, even these are sometimes led away spoiled of all. So that though they would, yet they shall not be able to direct or deliver those that trust them and depend upon them.

Hence Observe,

First, *A Spirit of Counsel is the gift of God*:

It is a special gift of God to be able to give good Counsel, it is

is a great gift of God, to be willing to receive good counsel. I scarce know which is the greater, to be willing to receive good counsel, or to be able to give it. Many can give good counsel, who will not receive it : To give or to receive *are the gifts of God.*

Secondly Observe,

Kingdoms and States fail, when Counsels fail.

Jobs scope is to shew the alterations that are in Kingdoms : now as by the majesty of Kings, the wisdom of Counsellors, the prudence of Judges, the eloquence of Orators, and valour of Souldiers, Kingdoms flourish and are established ; so by the taking away or decay of these, Kingdoms decay and come to nothing, or to that which is *next to nothing, a Chaos of confusion.* This judgment is threatned (*Isa. 3. 4.*) *In that day the Lord will take away from Jerusalem, the stay and the staff, the whole stay of Bread, and the whole stay of Water.* There is a twofold staff of a people, there is a *natural staff*, and there is a *civil staff* ; the natural staff is bread and water, which by a *Senechdoche* are put for all the necessary supports of a natural life. The removal of these is ruine ; yet God when he intends ruine, takes away other sties besides these. The same Prophet proceeds in this sad Narrative. *He will take away also the mighty man, and the man of War, the Judge and the Prophet, and the Prudent, and the Ancient, the Captain of fifty, and the Honourable man, and the Counsellor.* Thus the Lord takes away the *civil staff and stay* of a people, that is, men inabled for publike services. And when these foundations of humane Society are out of course, or removed out of place, down comes the Roof and highest Pinnacles of the most potent Commonwealths. For as *when vision*, that is, the word preached, *faileth, the people perish* ; (the preaching of the word is called a vision, either because the word was received by vision from God, or because in it, the Lord is seen and his truth is discovered to us.) Now (I say) as when this vision faileth, the people perish, that is, their Souls perish, the spiritual part perisheth, they perish in the capacity of a Church : So when counsel fails, the people perish in their civil capacity, as they are a polittike State or Common-wealth. Learn hence, what need we have to pray for the maintenance of these staves. God in judgment may lead our Counsellors away spoiled, and then we are spoiled.

Thirdly Observe,

The ruine of Kingdoms is not from chance and fortune, but by the decree and purposes of God.

He leadeth Counsellours away spoiled, He in mercy giveth Counsellours, to establish and preserve Kingdoms, and when either Counsellours abuse their wisdom, or when a people abuse the blessings which God giveth, or hath restored to them by their Counsels, then he takes them away, He spoileth the Counsellours that the people may be spoiled. We sometimes wonder that Counsellours have no more wisdom, we should rather be humbled that our selves have no more goodness; Usually a people are first spoiled of goodness, before Counsellours are spoiled of wisdom to give advice, or are successles in what they advise. If God doth this we cannot complain: When he gives Counsellours, he is not indebted to doe it; and when he takes them away he is provoked to doe it; he takes them not away whilst good counsels are received, or while we are thankful to him for the good we receive by counsel. When the Lord would destroy Egypt, he spoiled the Counsellours of Egypt (Jer. 19. 11, 12, 13.) *Surely the Princes of Zoan are fools, the counsels of the wise Counsellours of Pharaoh is become brutish; How say ye unto Pharaoh, I am the Son of the wise, the Son of ancient Kings?* The Prophet discovers their degeneracy from their Ancestours. And whence was all this? Was this from the turning of fortunes Wheel, as Heathens used to speak? No, vers. 17. *Because of the counsel of the Lord of Hosts, which he hath determined against it.* The Lord had a counsel, and his counsel was against Egypt, therefore the counsel of the wise shall not help Egypt: For the Princes of Zoan shall become fools, and the counsel of the wise Counsellours of Pharaoh brutish. When the most proper means of safety cannot save, nothing can. And though Counsellors themselves continue wise, yet they shall have no better success than fools. *Achitophels* counsel was in an ill matter, yet it was the best counsel that could be given to facilitate the ends of *Absalom*, but the Lord turned it into foolishness: The event is the same, whether God turn (as he did *Achitophels*) wise counsel into foolishness, or (as it follows in this Text) *the wisest Counsellors into fools*; both these are alike easie to God and fatal unto man.

And

And he makes the Judges fools.

Some expound this as a Repetition of the former clause. *A Counsellor may also be a Judge*; so they are co-incident terms. But rather take them distinctly, for here are three Officers specified: First, He who is supream, *the King*: Secondly, They who are subordinate, *the Judge, and the Counsellor*. Now as He leadeth Counsellors away spoiled, so he makes the Judges fools.

The Judge (as distinguished from the Counsellor) is one who administreteth justice according to Law; Judges are servants to the Law, and Rulers to the people, Gen. 19. 9. This fellow came in to sojourn, and he will needs be a Judge; he will govern and give us the rule, he will take upon him to teach us what to doe, say the Sodomites to Lot. After the death of Joshua, the supream Magistrate in Israel was called a Judge, till Saul was elected King. Here the Judge is a subordinate Magistrate, placed under Kings.

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Ita significat ut idem sit quod regere, remp. administrare leges & jura prescribere.

He makes the Judges fools.

Not by any positive act, infusing folly. But God may be said to make Judges fools, two ways. First, By not enlightning their understandings, and leaving them in the dark: Secondly, By overreaching their understanding, and outwitting them in the light. It is usual amongst us, to say, of a very wise man; *He will make such a one a very fool if he deal with him*: Not that he puts folly into the man, or withdraweth wisdom from him, but he doth so much overmatch and overpoise him in parts, that when he deals or argues with him, he will appear but a child or a very fool. Those Israelites that went to search the Land of Canaan were doubtless no Dwarfs, yet when they saw the huge Sons of Anak, they looked on themselves like Grass-hoppers. A tall man is but low of stature; A rich man but poor; A wise man but a fool in comparison of him who greatly excels in stature, riches or wisdom. We may take this Text either of a privative act, the Lord withdraws and with-holds the light, so that the Judge cannot see the rule of the Law, and then (like a fool) he errs in judgment; or of a superlative act, for though the Judge retain his light yet the Lord makes a fool of him. Who can tell how much the wisdom of God exceeds the wisdom of man, when the Apostle

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tells

tells us, that *the foolishness of God is wiser than man*? 1 Cor. 1. 25. *I the foolishness of God* (namely that which vain men count foolishness) *be wiser than men*, then surely the wisdom of God will soon make the wisest among men fools indeed.

Again, *Job* doth not say, *He makes fools Judges*; that the Lord doth sometimes (Isa. 3. 4.) *I will give Children to be their Princes, and Babes shall rule over them*: The Prophet speaks not of Children in age, for *Josiah was a childe*, and but eight yeers old, yet a great blessing to the Kingdom of *Judah*, but he means children in understanding. The fore-thought of that troubled *Solomon*, Eccles. 2. 19. *I hated all my labour which I had taken un' er the Sun* (saith he) *because I should leave it unto the man that shall be after me, and who knoweth whether he shall be a wise man or a fool*? *Rehoboam* proved a foolish Prince. Now as God to punish a people makes fools Judges, so which is more, *He maketh Judges fools*, let them be as wise as they will, he outwitteth them, and catcheth them in their own devices.

Judices in stuporem, Vulg. in pavorem, Sept. in conturbationem mentis.

The Vulgar Latine reads it thus, *He brings the Judges into astonishment, or amazement*. The Septuagint, *He brings them into fear and trembling*: Both note the same thing, that the Lord casts them into a consternation of spirit, and then they fall upon erroneous and foolish determinations. (Isa. 19. 14.) *He minglith a perverse spirit in the midst of them*. They turn giddy, or are giddy with turning, and know not well what to do, or which way to resolve.

Hence Observe,

First, *That the wisest men are not always wise*.

God can make Judges fools. As wisdom is the gift of God, so is the continuance of it: And unless we receive a supply of wisdom from God, we shall quickly turn fools, and do things rather like mad men, than like men of reason and understanding. *We want daily wisdom for our daily work, as much as we do daily bread for our daily wants*.

Secondly, *Failings in judgment are in judgment from God, or, God in judgment makes men fail in judgment*.

It is a high judgment of wrath, to disable men from judging in reason.

This God doth, both to punish the sins of Judges, and of those from whom they judge. When a people trust in the wisdom of their Judges, when they make them god, of whom God hath only

only said, *ye are Gods*; Then God makes them lesse then men. (A^g. 12.) When Herod made an Oration, the people cryed, *The voice of God and not of man*. Though Judges should give glory to God, as Herod did not, and so was consumed of worms, yet, God may send a worm into the counsels and resolutions of the Judges, and eat them out, because of such cries among the people.

Lastly, It is matter of comfort to consider, that the Lord can make Judges fools: That as Mr. Broughton translates this verse) *He brings Counsellours to badness, and Judges to stark madness*. We need not fear what wise men act against us, while the only wise God acteth for us.

Job goes on, and gives an higher instance then in Judges and Counsellours.

[Verse 18. *He looseth the bond of Kings, and girdeth their loins with a girdle.*

He looseth.

The Hebrew is, he openeth or untieth the bound of Kings.

The bond.

The word signifies, any thing that knitteth or holdeth together. Sometimes it is put for discipline and correction; The Greek expresseth instruction and correction, both the parts of discipline, by one word.

We may take this *bond* two waies. First, Passively, and secondly, Actively.

First, Passively, and then by the bonds of Kings, are understood those bonds wherewith Kings are bound. So the Chaldee paraphrast translates: *He bringeth Kings from bonds to the Throne*, that is, Kings who have been bound, captivated, and brought very low, he raiseth up again: The Septuagint runs upon that sense, *placing Kings in their thrones*; as speaking of those Kings who had been put out, or put off from their thrones; these the Lord re-inthrones, or sets up again.

And then in correspondency to that understanding of the word [*bond*] the latter clause of the verse [*and girdeth their loins with a girdle*] is to be understood in a good sense. He giveth them strength and honour, he setleth their affairs and

כִּבְדוֹ arad.

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Quod est con-

stringere aut

ligare vinculo

aut quatenus in-

structione aut

ardore disci-

plina, quam

Græci τὰ δυνάμεις

vocant.

καὶ δὲ ἀνορθώ-

σάσθαι ἐν θρό-

νῳ. Sept.

Catenam regum

solvit, q d.

emvinculis eos

vehit ad reg-

num. Tharg.

crowns, after greatest shakings and depressions. A BOND is for punishment, a girdle is both for strength and ornament. A girdle is the emblem of power, and to gird a man is as much as to give him power: So that when it's said, be girdeth their loins with a girdle, the meaning is (according to the sense given of the former clause) he strengtheneth them in their Kingdom, State and government, and restores them the obedience of their people; thus the phrase is used (Isa. 45. 5. concerning Cyrus, I girded thee though thou hast not known me; that is, I set thee upon the throne, I established thee, and confirmed thee, I put thee into that high condition, though thou little thoughtest that it was I who did it. There is a profitable truth in this interpretation. Kings are delivered from bonds, and set upon their thrones by the special providence and power of God,

But if we view this text with the context more strictly; the scope of the whole lodges our thoughts in another sense. For Job is setting forth the judgment of God upon Kingdoms, in the judgments which he brings upon *Councillours, Judges, and Kings.* Therefore we cannot with any futableness to the context (though the thing be in it self a truth) understand it of a work of deliverance, in loosing the bonds of Kings, and re-estating them upon their thrones. Here then we must take the word *bonds*, actively, and so we may expound it two waies.

First, for those *bonds* with which Kings illegally bind their people. Such are the bonds of oppression and tyranny: And so the meaning of, *He looseth the bonds of Kings,* is this; God by his mighty power breaks, or by his wisdom unites those bonds of oppression, with which Kings attempt to enslave their people; such were the bonds of *Rehobaham*, whose resolution was (though it was a rash one) to bind his people in bonds; and when they petitioned him, complaining of heavy burthens laid upon them in his fathers dayes, praying that now his yoke might be made easier; Easier? saith he, nay it shall be made heavier, *whereas my father made your yoke heavy, I will add to your yoke; my father chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions, my little finger shall be heavier than my fathers loines.* I will publish such Edicts, and put out such proclamations, as shall be so many chains, bonds and fetters upon you, to tye you faster, and hold you closer in subjection than ever you were to this day. This sort of *bonds*, the Lord breaks, he looseth the *oppressing bonds*

Alitro vinculum quo illi alios vincunt, significat saepe tyrannide aut impotenti regum dominatione liberari subditos dum jugum excutunt quod est potestate tyranni exeunt. Merc.

bonds of Princes. When they act the *Tyrant*, not the *King*, and instead of ruling, vex a people, when they will not let their subjects enjoy such liberty as becomes men or Christians, then he looseth their bonds. Kings and people too, join sometimes (though in vain) to break the bonds of God: (Psal. 2. 1, 2) *Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? The Kings of the earth set themselves, and the Rulers take counsel together; And what is it upon? It is this, Come let us break their bonds asunder, and cast away their cords from us: What? Will Christ subdue us to his laws? Will he lay bonds upon us, and make us slaves under the scepter of his government? Come, let us break these bonds, and cast these cords from us, let us get out our necks from this yoke, and our shoulders from these burdens. We are a free people, our tongues and our consciences are our own, who is Lord over us? Thus people and Kings conspire to loosen the bonds which Jesus Christ the King of Saints, and King of Nations chargeth upon them for their good: they will not abide such bonds, not they, but they must, for they do but imagine a vain thing.* But when Kings and Princes out of the pertinaciousness and pride of their spirits, or out of an ungoverned resolution in government, say that they will lay bonds, and tributes, impositions and services upon their people, which make them groan; then the Lord takes counsel in heaven (and it is not in vain) I will break their bonds, (saith he) and cast their cords off from you, and he doth it. As *Sampson* brake the withs and bonds wherewith the *Philistines* bound him, so doth God those wherewith his people are bound, as a thread, as a thread of tow is broken, when it toucheth (or as the Hebrew is) *smelleth the fire*. Thus he wrought for his holy Name, and for his people in Egypt *Pharaoh* said to his wife Counsellours, *Come, let us work wisely, let us make bonds for this people, and bring them into perpetual servitude; they were first commanded to make brick, and then compelled to make brick without straw, they served with Rigour. Here were bonds, but God loosened them, and by a mighty hand and stretched out arm, delivered his people, drowning Pharaoh in the red Sea. Thus the bond of that King was loosened; and so were those of Rehobaham; for while he (as was toucht before) prepared bonds for his People, and thought he could never make them slaves enough, God in judgment stirred up another King, and ten*

tribes of twelve departed from his obedience, and never returned again; neither did God permit *Rehoboham* to proceed in his attempt for the reducing of them, but took the revolt upon himself, saying plainly by the mouth of his Prophet, *This thing is from me*, 1 King 12. 24. Thus the bonds of that King were loosened, and himself was brought into straits, while he endeavoured unjustly to straiten those in whose just liberties he should have rejoiced. Those are the freest Kings who govern a free People, and the more free a people are, the more are they truly subject. Slavery doth either embase the spirits of a people, or heightens them to disobedience. *Oppression makes a wise man mad, but none are so mad as oppressors, how wise soever they seem to be.* When their bonds are loosed (as they shall) they loose more then they could get, should they continue fastned.

Secondly, As Kings have *oppressing bonds*; so governing bonds. Wholesome lawes are the peoples bonds, and it is both their duty and their liberty to be thus bound. *It is a far greater bondage to be under no laws, then to be under hard ones.* When every man doth that which is right in his own eyes, there is scarce any man will be found either doing or enjoying that which is right. Therefore let people take heed, lest while they complain of the bonds of oppression, that they do not throw off the bonds of subjection: Yet thus also God looseth the bonds of Kings: He in judgment to Kings and Kingdoms, leaves a people to forget their duty, and to withdraw from due obedience.

The Vulgar translateth, ** He unbuckleth or dissolveth the belt of Kings*; which is glossed to this sense; *|| he divests them of regal power.* The belt was alwaies a mark of honour, and some of the Learned observe that it was anciently an emblem of Kingly power. And so the unloosing of it must imply the taking away of that power. ** The belt is taken here by others for the emblem of a souldiers power only, not of a Kings.* Hence girding or putting on the belt, is as much as preparing for war: *Gird up now thy loins like a man*, saith God to Job (chap 38. 3.) when he challenged him to a dispute, which is a verbal war. (Psalm 93. 1.) *The Lord reigneth, he is clothed with majesty, the Lord is clothed with strength, wherewith he hath girded himself.* David giving charge to Solomon upon his death-bed concerning Joab, who had been his chief Commander, or the Generalissimo of his forces, saith, *he put the bloud of war upon his girdle* (or the belt, so

Pagnine

* Baltheum regum dissolvit. Vulg.

|| *Autoritatem & imperium illis adimit.* Mer. In Baltheo regnantis intelligitur gloria, in fine vero è regno d. positi ignominia Hieron. Aureus Baltheus in signe fuit regum, clarissimus magistratus, quare spoliari cingulo dicebantur qui magistratu & dignitate privabantur. Pined.

* Baltheus non fuit in signe regale sed militare. Bold,

Pagnine translates) that was upon his loins (1 King 2. 6.) Chriſt himſelf (Iſa. 11. 5.) is diſcribed, having Righteouſneſs the girdle of his loins, and faithfullneſs the girdle of his reins, that is, coming forth girded, or belted about as a victorious Conquerour, with righteouſneſs and faithfullneſs. That's the meaning of that cooling meſſage (1 King 20. 11) Let not him that girdeth on his harnes, boaſt himſelf as he that putteth it off; that is, do not ſing *Victoria* before the battle; the event of war is uncertain. And it was uſual, when commiſſion Officers of Armies were caſhired and turned off, for any miſſemeanour, to take away their belt. There is a famous ſtory in *Suidas* about it, of one *Auxenſius* a great Commander under *Lycinus* the Emperour; He reports, that when *Lycinus* came into the Court of his palace, where there was a great bath and ſome vines growing about it, with the image of *Bacchus* ſet up among the vines: The Emperour bad *Auxenſius* draw his ſword and cut of a bunch of grapes which aſſoon as he had done, he commanded him to offer it at the feet of *Bacchus*, which was as much as to acknowle, him to be a god; *Auxenſius* answered, I am a Chriſtian, I will not do it: What? not do it upon my command, ſaith the Emperour, then you muſt quit your place: with all my heart, Sir, ſaid the Chriſtian ſouldier, and in token of it, put off his belt, which was as much as the giving up of his commiſſion, and went away with joy in that ſuffering for Chriſt.

According to this tranſlation and uſe of the word, he looſeth the bond and belt of Kings, the ſign is put for the thing ſignified; and the meaning riſeth thus. God caſteth down Kings, not only from their ſovereignty and regal power, but from their military power. He takes not only their crown from their head, and their ſcepter out of their hand, but the belt and ſword from their loins: So that as their people reſuſe to give them any willing ſubjection, ſo they are diſabled to compel them.

Hence Obſerve,

Kings are in the hand of God, to ſet up and to caſt down as himſelf pleaſeth.

By me (ſaith God) Kings reign and Princes decree juſtice, *Prov.* 8. 15. and, when Princes reſuſe to decree juſtice, God can ſay it, and effect it, ye ſhall not reign. (*IIa. 45. 1.*) Thus ſaith the Lord to his anointed, to *Cyrus*, whoſe right hand I have holden to ſubdue Nations before him, and I will looſe the loines of Kings, &c.

Noli carere triumphum ante victoriam, non- dum d' poſuiſti a mandam pace potius.

Abſit Imperator, Chriſtianus enim ego ſum igitur apage reliſta milita (inquit Lycinus) at hic nihil cunctatus ſolvionem ex ſtatim alacer palatio exceſſit. Sui. In Auxen- tio.

Non ſolum regali diademate illos eruit ſed etiam Bulbea quod eſt ſimplicis mibitis inſigne, i.e. illuc eos abiecit, ut nec militis quidem nomine digni reputentur. Bol

God set up Cyrus King, to put down Kings; yet he saith, *I will loose the loins of Kings.* Cyrus was the instrument, but both the design and the success was of God. Kings cannot make bonds so fast either to strengthen themselves, or strait their people as God can loose them. There are four bonds which the Lord usually looseth, when he chastens the pride and sin of Kings.

First, The bonds of their authority, that their word is not revered nor received as before. *Where the word of a King is* (saith Solomon) *there is power:* Yet when God is angry, he can render their word *powerless.*

Secondly, He looseth the bonds of their *riches and revenues:* Riches are a strength to Kings; Riches are the support, as well as the fruit of peace; And they are the sinews of war: When treasure is gon, power staies not long behind. *Money answers all things;* and when that failes, Princes seldom receive contentful answers. God sends a moth upon the publike treasure, and that eats asunder many bonds and obligations.

Thirdly, Which is stronger than the former two, God looseth the bond of a peoples love and affection unto Kings. *Love is the bond of obedience, both to God and man.* Princes sit safest in the affections of their people. That King who hath the hearts of his subjects, hath their hands and their purses too at command. *Jehoram* out-lived, or rather never lived in the love of his people, and he dyed undesired (2 Chron. 21. 20.) *Some have said, let them hate while they must fear: but that fear is safest which springs from love.*

*Oderint dum
metuant.*

Fourthly, The Lord looseth the bond of their leagues, alliances and confederacies with foreign nations: They shall not stand fast by covenants with men, who break the covenant of their God. Through this judgment of God, Kings have been oftner entangled, than strengthened with leagues. Those leagues and alliances spoken of by Daniel (chap. 11.) between the Kings of the North and of the South, proved snares to catch, rather than he'ps to uphold one another.

These bonds, or what bonds else soever, the Kings of the earth make, either to support themselves, or oppress their people, are loosed by the power of God. As there is no bond of God so strong, but the heart of man will attempt to break it; so there is no bond of man so strong, but the hand of God can break it, *He looseth the bonds of Kings,*

And girded their loines with a girdle.

In the first interpretation of the former clause; *This girding of the loines of Kings with a girdle*, was taken in a good ſence namely, for the ſtrengthening of their State. But in purſuance of the ſecond interpretation, which hath appeared moſt agreeable to this text, *The girding their loines with a girdle*, undergoes a very different conſideration, and may be taken two waies.

Per cingulum aliqui vires innuunt, cingulum enim lumbi prae-cinguntur in quibus virum ſedes & roboris. Druf.

First, As a girdle is oppoſed to a belt. A girdle is of ordinary uſe, a common part of clothing: Every man weareth a girdle, but every man doth not wear a belt, that hath ſomewhat of honour in it. And ſo the ſence is this, he looſeneth the belt of Kings, and takes off their ſword, ſo that they cannot carry on their wars: And then, *He girdeth their loines with a girdle*, that is, he brings them into a low or common condition.

Habitus hominis abjeſtiſſimus ut opponitur Baitho, qui reges ornant. Pined.

Secondly, A girdle, and girding with it, ſignifies, not only a common, but a ſervile, or captivated condition. So ſome expound the words here, as an alluſion to that cuſtome which was amongſt the *Persians*: (one of the Rabbins is clear for it, and frames his comment upon that notion.) The Kings of *Persia* were wont to gird thoſe with a girdle whom they had taken captive; and they miniſtered unto, and attended thoſe great Kings, being girt with a girdle. Now, That to be girt about the loins is a poſture of ſervice, is clear alſo in Scripture, being a metaphor taken from the uſage of the Eaſtern countries, where, wearing long garments, they girded them in all preparations for travail or labour. *Gird up the loins of your mindes* (ſaith the Apoſtle, 1 Pet. 1. 13.) that is, be in a readineſs to ſerve the Lord. When Chriſt went to waſh his Diſciples feet, *Job 13. He took a towel and girded himſelf.* And when he would ſhew how bleſſed thoſe ſervants ſhall be whom their Lord when he cometh ſhall find watching; He tels them (*Luk. 12. 37.*) *Verily I ſay unto you, that he ſhall gird himſelf, and make them to ſit down to meat, and will come forth and ſerve them.* And again when he would prove that no man by all his watchfulneſs and diligence, can deſerve any thing at the hand of God; He puts a query, *Luk. 17. 78 Which of you having a ſervant plowing or ſeeding cattle, will ſay unto him, when he is come from the field, go and ſit down to meat, and will not rather ſay unto him, make ready wherewith I may ſup, and gird thy ſelf and ſerve me, &c.* According to this ap-

Cingulum perzonam exponitur, qua ſolebant praecigni, qui regibus Perſarum miniſtrabant, & qua duces exulum Iſraelitarum ante reges Perſarum miniſtrantes accirgebantur. Merc. ex Rambam.

proved

q d. Commutat
eos in ſervulos.
Druf.
Præcingit fune
lumbis eorum.
Funis nomine
vilitas rone de
notatur qua
plebeis condi-
tionis homines
viri ſolent. Bold.
Pro zona ſu-
niculus.

proved uſe of the phraſe, *Jobs* ſentence is this, *He looſeth the bonds of Kings, and girdeth their loins with a girdle*, that is, they who ruled others, are forced to obey, and from commanders are turned into ſervants: So low the Lord hath ſometimes caſt the mightieſt and higheſt Princes of the world.

The Vulgar tranſlateth yet more low, *He girdeth their loins about with a rope*, which is the meaneſt matter and making of a girdle: They ſhall not only have a girdle for a belt, but a rope in ſtead of a girdle; So that word is rendred (*Iſa 3.24.*) by the ſame Tranſlatour, The wanton and delicate dames of Iſrael, ſhall have in ſtead of a *curious girdle a rope*, to note the extreame turn which God would make in the ſtate of thoſe proud women; and thus he can abaſe the pride of the greateſt men.

Let that be the Obſervation upon the whole matter,

God ſometimes doth, and he alwaies can bring thoſe that are higheſt in worldly dignity into the extreameſt depth of worldly miſery.

Rulers become captives, they who ſate on thrones live in priſons; the *Royal beir* is laide aſide, and a common girdle, yea girding with ſackcloth taken up by the mightieſt earthly Gods, when the God of heaven is angry. *The greateſt changes are incident to the greateſt perſons.* *Nebuchadnezzars dream* was ſull to this point (*Dan. 2.21.*) He forgetting it, ſends for the Magicians and Aſtologers to tell him both what his dream was, and what the interpretation of it, but they could not. *There is not a man upon the earth (ſay they) that can ſhew the Kings matter, therefore there is no King, Lord, nor Ruler, that asked ſuch things at any Magician or Aſtrologer, none can ſhew it unto the King, except the Gods whoſe dwelling is not with fleſh.* But unto *Daniel* the ſecret was revealed by God, and before he revealed it to the King, he makes this preface almoſt in *Jobs* ſtile and language, but fully with his ſpirit and intent, bleſſing God becauſe *wiſdom and might are his, and he changeth the times and ſeaſons, he removeth Kings, and ſetteth up Kings, he giveth wiſdom unto the wiſe, and knowledg to them that know underſtanding, &c. (verſe. 20.21.)* Then he tells *Nebuchadnezzar* his dream, and the interpretation thereof. A goodly image it was, yet degenerating and gradually abaſing from a *Head of Gold*, to a *breſt and armes of ſilver*, thence to *belly and thighes of Braſſe*, to *Legs of iron*, and *Feet of iron*,
and

and clay. All these represented some Kings and Kingdoms falling, and others rising upon their ruines, till a Kingdom doth arise which should never fall (*vers. 44.*) In the same prophecy (*chap. 4. 10.*) We have the Kingly power described by a goodly tree, the height whereof reached unto heaven, under which the beasts of the field had shadow, and the fowls of the Heaven dwelt in the boughs thereof, &c. But, *Behold a watcher, and an holy one come down from heaven, He cryed aloud and said thus, Hew down the tree, and cut off his branches, and shake off his leaves, and scatter his fruit,* so the body of this flourishing tree vanished to nothing, only the stump of his roots were left in the earth with a band of iron and brags. This vision is also interpreted (*vers. 24. 25.*) by the loosening the bond of that great King so much, that he was driven from men, and took up his lodging with the beasts of the field, and was made to eat grass as Oxen, and was wet with the dew of Heaven. God to shew that he can throw the most potent Monarchs, into the lowest condition of men, speaks of this Monarch; as thrown into the condition of beasts: Being (as our late Annotators have observed upon the place) either stricken mad, and so avoided mans company, or being cast out for his tyranny, he wandred among the beasts, and eat herbs and grass. These visions are clearest manifestations, that God cuts down Kings and Kingdoms, even to the very stumps (as we say) to the very roots, and sometimes pulls up root and all.

And, that God hath actually done thus to the greatest Princes, all histories are full: there is no truth hath received greater testimony then this. The records of Scripture, give us high instances of it (*Judg. 1. 6. 7.*) *Adonibezek* a great King, was taken prisoner, by the Army of the two tribes, *Judah* and *Simeon*, and *They cut off his thumbs, and his great toes:* The eminency of the judgment draws from him an acknowledgment of his own former cruelty, and of the present justice of God upon him, *Three-score and ten Kings having their thumbs and great toes cut off, gathered their meat under my table, as I have done, so God hath requir'd me.* He cut off their thumbs, that they might be disabled from handling arms, or fighting with him; he cut off their great toes, that they might be disabled to run from him, or escape by flight. Suppose these were petty Princes, yet their number was great; and the hand of God was seen greatly both in casting them from their dignities, and in catching him at last, who had

captivated all them. And as those heathen Kings, so also some of the Kings of *Judah*, who were of Gods special anointing and setting up, were miserably afflicted, and brought into bondage by the special counsel of God. Take the example of *Zedekiah* (2 King. 25. 6. 7.) whom, when the Army of the *Chaldees* took the City, they persued and took, and brought to the King of *Babylon*; who gave judgement upon him; and they slew the sons of *Zedekiah* before his eyes; and put out the eyes of *Zedekiah*, and bound him with fetters of brass, and carried him to *Babylon*. How sad a spectacle was here? A King of *Judah*, the ruler of Gods chosen people, in fetters of brass? When the latter Greek Empire was overthrown by the Turks, that great family of the *Paleologi* (in which the Empire had long continued) came to that lowness, that some of the Royal blood became servants and ordinary tradesmen. In them the observation of the Preacher was fulfilled (*Ecclef. 10. 7.*) *I have seen servants upon horses, and Princes walking as servants upon the Earth.* *Sapor* King of *Persia*, took *Valentinian* the Emperor prisoner, and used him as a stool for himself to step upon; when he mounted into his saddle. *Sesostris* King of *Egypt* subduing divers Kings, compelled them to draw his Chariot. The *Roman* Historians give frequent testimony, that in the flourishing state of that *Imperious Common-wealth*, conquered Kings and Princes were dragg'd at their Chariots in triumph. Victorious *Tamerlane* having overthrown and taken *Bajazet* the Turkish Emperour, shackled him in fetters of gold, caused him to be shut up in an iron cage, made in the fashion of a grate, and so carryed him like a wilde beast, as he marched thorow *Asia*, to be scorned of his own people. *Henry* the fourth Emperour of *Germany*, having been oft worsted in battel, was at last reduced to such exigents, that he had not wherewith to buy him bread, but was forced to come to the great Church at *Späres* (which he himself had built) and there beg to be a *Chorister*, that so he might get a small stipend to keep him from starving, but could not obtain it: which repulse caused him to bespeak the standers by, in the words of lamenting *Job* (chap. 19. 21.) *Have pity upon me, O my friends, for the hand of God hath touched me.* The weight of these miseries brought him shortly after to his grave; but he found none so humane as to put him in, for he lay unburied five years, no man daring to do it, because the Pope had forbidden it to be done. These ex-
amples.

amples (more might be added) are clear expositions of, or ex- Pezer. Mellifici;
Histor. par. 3.
periments rather of his Scripture. Let the great men of the earth
hear and fear, and do no more presumptuously, let them take the
counsel of Christ (*Psal. 2.*) *Be wise therefore now O ye Kings,*
and be instructed ye Judges of the earth; Serve the Lord with fear,
and rejoice with trembling : Kisse the Son lest he be angry, and
ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little :
There is no striving by the most glorious Princes of the earth,
with him who is the King of Heaven, and Lord of glory.

Take two corollaries from the whole. *If the Lord do thus*
to Kings like tennis-balls, and hurl whole Kingdoms into ruine; if
he befools the Judges, and spoils the Counsellours of the earth, sura-
ly he will not spare inferiours and weaklings, who strengthen them-
selves against him. If God deal thus with Kings, what will he
do with subjects? He that smites Princes, will he let a people
pass unpunisht? God hath in all ages set some Kings and Princes
on the scaffold, and made them eminent in sufferings, as well as
in dignity, that others beholding the justice of God, might glo-
rifie him, and humble themselves. Hence we may argue, as
Christ did in his own case; *If it be thus done to the green tree,*
what shall be done to the dry? If the Lord hath been thus severe
against the tallest cedars in *Lebanon*, and against the oaks of
Bashan (Kings and Monarchs of the world) that are exalted and
lifted up: Shall not low and dry shrubs (inferior persons) feel
the axe and stroke of his anger, when they sin contemptuously
against him? Even these are often as proud, unjust and op-
pressive, according to the line of their power, and the length of
their hand, as they who have longest hands, and largest power. It
is an admirable dispensation, when God laies his rod upon the
back of Kings, to warn mean men. The Children of Princes are
usually corrected (for their faults) by correcting the Children
of plebeians in their presence; their Tutors and governours do
only put them in fear, and make them know discipline; by the
smart which others feel. What shall we say then, when God
corrects the children of Kings, yea Kings themselves, in the sight
of the common people, that they may be warned and learn dis-
cipline.

Secondly, *If the strength of Kings cannot hold out against the*
anger of God, how shall the weak stand before him when he is angry?
That argument in the Prophet (*Jer. 12. 5.*) *If thou hast run with*

foot-men, and they have wearied thee, then how canst thou contend with horses) may be inverted here, if God hath contended with horses and they could not weary him, how easily will he run with footmen: The stateliest palaces, and strongest thrones of Kings have been consumed or thrown down at his word: then what will become of cottages and common mens estates, when he speaks against them. When the Lord hath once (as lamenting Jeremy complains, *Lam. 2. 16.*) *in the indignation of his anger despised the King and the Priest*, his indignation will make quick dispatch of the rest, who follow their steps in sin, or partake in their transgression.

JOB Chap. 12. Vers. 19, 20, 21.

He leadeth Princes away spoiled, and overthroweth the mighty.

He removeth away the speech of the trusty, and taketh away the understanding of the aged.

He powreth contempt upon Princes, and weakeneth the strength of the mighty.

JOB goes on in his enumeration of instances, for the proof and clearing up of his grand proposition. In the context before opened we saw how God *leadeth Counsellours away spoiled, and maketh the Judges fools*; how he *looseth the bond of Kings, and girdeth their loines with a girdle*. Here we find him at the same work still, though upon other objects, *he leadeth Princes away spoiled, and overthroweth the mighty*. There is a difference about the word which we translate *Princes*: At the 17th verse, *He leadeth Counsellours away spoiled*, and here, *He leadeth Princes away spoiled*: Spoiled (as was shewed before) of their ends, and of their hopes, of their power and honour, yea and of their wits and understandings, which causeth some to render it, *He leadeth Princes into madness*. Mr. Broughton, *He bringeth Dukes to badness*: And the Vulgar, *He leadeth Priests into dishonour, or spoiled of their honour*. The Hebrew [*Cohen*] indifferently

*Facit principes
ut deveniant in
dementiam. Jun
Ducit sacer-
dotes inglorios.
Vulg.*

*Ministrare in
sacris aut poli-
tici. Sacerdos
principes in qua-
cung, dignitate
constituunt.*

ferently signifies a *Prince* or a *Priest*, and is frequently used in the old Testament for both: And the verb whence this noun is derived, signifies to administer, both in political, and ecclesiastical affairs, and so either a governour in the Common-wealth, or a governour in the Church. It is put for a Church-governour, *Isa. 28. 7. The Priest and the Prophet have erred*, *Plal. 99. 6. Moses and Aa-on among his Priests*: And for a State-governour, *2 Sam. 8. 18. Davids sons were chief rulers*: For both, *Gen. 41. 45. The Priest, or Prince of On*, *Exod. 2. 16. The Priest, or Prince of Midian*.

Three reasons are assigned, why those two dignities fell under one expression.

First, Because of old time, *the Priest and the Prince* were one person. The eldest in the family (before the giving of the law) was both: And after the giving of the law, together with all the ceremonial institutes, the high Priest of *Aarons* order was a great Prince in *Israel*.

Secondly, The Priesthood in general was an office of honour, therefore it is exprest by a word of honour.

Thirdly, Because the Priests were unto God, the King of heaven, as Princes are unto the Kings of the earth: Princes stand but a degree below Kings, and bear the great offices in Kingdoms, they are of Kings secret counsel, and know their hearts, they conveigh the minde of Kings to the people, and often as Commissioners represent their persons. Such (in their capacity) were Priests, in reference unto God; and are therefore called *Gods nigh ones*. This is it which the Lord spake (saith *Moses*, when the two sons of *Aaron* were slain by fire, while they offered with strange fire, (*Levit. 10. 3.*) *I will be sanctified in those that come nigh me, or in my nigh ones*; such especially were the Priests; they approached to God, and received his mind, and were therefore said to speak from Gods mouth, and to preserve knowledge, even the knowledge of himself in their lips. God committed his secrets, and the mysteries of his will to the Priests first, and by their Ministry conveyed both unto the people: They were as the vessel or cabinet, in which God laid up those pretious treasures; *The Priests lips should keep knowledge, and they should seek the law at his mouth, for he is the messenger of the Lord of hosts* (*Mal. 2. 7.*) God gave the honour of this title to the whole Nation of the Jews, they were called a *Nation of Priests*,

*Ex omnibus
regnis vos eri-
tis mihi regnum
nobilissimum
familiarissimum
amicissimum
quibus arcana
& secretiora
consilia reve-
labo.*

(Exod. 19. 6.) *Ye shall be to me a Kingdome of Priests, or a royal Priesthood :* A Kingdom of Priests, for two reasons chiefly : First, Because God did esteem that people above all the people of the earth, he put an honour and a value upon them, therefore saith he, *Ye shall be to me a Kingdome of Priests.* And secondly, Because God communicated more of his counsels to that people, then to any other people, and they were more familiar with him then the rest of the world, even as the Priests were more familiar with God, and came nearer to him then the people. So that look what proportion the Priests among the Jews bore to the people, the same did the Jews bear to all other people of the world. We may take the word here in either sense, *He leadeth Princes, or, He leadeth Priests away spoyled.*

As the word is reduced *Priest*, Observe,

First, *That the holiness of the profession cannot keep the person from sin.*

Priests provoke God, and therefore they are spoyled. Grace it self is not, much less is any outward vocation, a bar against temptation : And they who fall in temptation are near falling into affliction, whosoever they are. Which makes a second Observation,

They that are near unto God shall suffer when they sin, and the nearer they are, they shall suffer the more, because the nearer they are, the greater is their sin.

The Priests are among the spoyled, Jer. 14. 18. *Both the Prophet and the Priest go about into a land that they know not, that is, they go into banishment, and are carried captives into a strange land.* That text hath a very different reading, for whereas the word which we translate *go about*, signifies also *to trade or make merchandize*, the whole is rendered to this sence : *The Prophets and Priests together make merchandize of you, and you either discern it not, or do not regard it.* This reading gives us a clear reason of that which is contained in the former. This shews their sin, and that their punishment, *Those Prophets and Priests who sell souls in their own land, are justly sold as slaves into a land that is not theirs.* (Lam. 2. 6.) *The Lord hath despised in the indignation of his anger, both the King and the Priest ; he puts King and Priest together, in suffering, because they were joyned in sinning. They who associate in doing evil, shall be associated in feeling it.* And they shall feel most evil, when they do it, whose office is
set

set up by God, and they put into office for the preventing of it : such are Kings and Priests. The Prophet *Melachy* reproves the *Levites* : (*Mal. 2. 8.*) *Ye are departed out of the way, ye have caused many to stumble at the law; ye have corrupted the covenant of Levi, that is, ye have been false, base, and unfaithful in your office: your selves have gone out of the way of truth and holiness, and ye have hindered those who would have walked in it. It was your duty to preserve the covenant made with your Tribe, but ye have corrupted it. This is your sin, and I will tell you your judgement: Therefore have I also made you contemptible and base before all the people.* We have seen such corrupting themselves and others, and we have seen them made contemptible enough before all. *Unsavory salt is fit only for the dunghill, the seat of contempt.*

As the word is rendered (*Prince*) in our Translation, Observe,

That the honour of man is no shelter against the wrath of God.

As the holiness of the Priests office, cannot do it, so neither can the power of the Princes office. Princes are called the shields of the earth (*Hos. 4. 18.*) *Her shields, (or, her rulers, as we render) with shame do love, Give ye.* They are (indeed) the shields of the earth, but they cannot shield themselves against the assaults of Heaven. Princes should be shields to protect men from the oppression of man, but they cannot protect themselves against the justice of God. The Prophet (*Isa. 43. 14.*) tells the people when they were in fear, *Thus saith the Lord your Redeemer, the holy one of Israel, for your sake I have sent to Babylon, and have brought down all their Nobles; the Hebrew is, I have brought down all their bars: Faithful Nobles are the bars of a Kingdom and Common-wealth, to keep out evils: It is their duty to bolt out impiety against God, and unrighteousness towards man: And as they should be a barre of equity against these evils of sin, so a barre of security to keep out the evils of trouble.* Now (saith the Lord) I have sent to Babylon, and have brought down all those Nobles, who were as bars in the way, to hinder your deliverance from, and return out of captivity. Those Nobles (it seems) were cross barr, they lay cross the way of the people of God, to hinder their passage out of Babylon, therefore God destroyed them. *When Nobles or great Princes bar up the liberty of Gods covenant people, their nobility and.*

and greatness will be no bar against their own misery. He leadeth Princes away spoiled, and

פְּדוֹ

*Supplantare in-
flectere mutare
dejecere, detur-
bare.*

He overthroweth the mighty.

Here is another act of Divine power. That, God is omnipotent proves he can do all things, but the doing of them is a visible proof of his omnipotency.

To overthrow, Imports utter ruine : he doth not only shake and displace, but he shakes them to peeces, roots them up, and laies them flat.

He overthroweth the mighty.

Princes are among the mighty ones of the earth, yet some Princes have no great might ; but how mighty soever Princes are, down they must, whether they will or no, when the Almighty wills it.

רַחֲמַיִם

*Robustus fortis
a rad רַחֲמַיִם
que vox affert
fortitudinem
quandam; que
non permittit se
tractari, &
duriciem que
pertinaciter
resistit.
Fluvios Ethan.*

The Hebrew word signifieth the most confirmed strength, even that strength which seems to laugh at opposition, and to have outgrown all fear of being weakned, or overpowred. Great and impetuous rivers are set out by that word (*Psal. 74. 15.*) *Thou driedst up mighty rivers*, or, *rivers of might*, rivers which nothing can stand against ; what can withstand a swelling torrent ? The weight and violence of water beareth down all before it : no bonds, no bounds of mans making can stay it. Yet the Lord can, he, and he only beareth down the waters, or he drieth them up : he either *drieth up mighty rivers*, or stoppeth their course, while they are running with full streams, in a full career.

Hence learn,

First, *That all strength and might is weak, before the strong and mighty God.*

He overthroweth the mighty (1 Sam. 2. 9.) *by strength shall no man prevail* ; when we conclude the probabilities, whether a party shall prevail or no, we count upon their strength : we reckon their numbers, we enquire what Armies they have in the field, what Garrisons in Cities, what friends and confederacies abroad, yet in all this we reckon not upon that which will do the thing, strength cannot do it, *by strength no man shall prevail*, *The Lord overthroweth the mighty* : whatsoever strength we have to assist us, or to oppose us, the Lord is stronger.

There

There is a fivefold strength, the overthrowing of which mightily declares the strength and might of God.

First, *The strength of the body*; God overthroweth the most robustious and giant-like men, the sons of Anak are but grasshoppers to him; they (who as we speak) have bodies of brass, he crusheth before the moth. Goliath had a mighty strength of body, and yet the Lord overthrew him: Sampson had a mighty strength of body, yet when the Lord withdrew from him, he was overthrown. Then remember the Prophets counsel (*Jer. 9. 23.*) *Let not the strong man glory in his strength, but let him that glorieth glory in the Lord, who overthroweth the mighty.*

Secondly, *God overthroweth the strength of riches*; Riches are a strong tower. The same word in the Hebrew signifies strength and riches, because a mans strength is computed by his riches; A rich man is a mighty man in the eye of the world, and so is a worldly rich man in his own eyes. Yet, as the strength of body within us, so the strength of estate without us, is soon blasted by the breath of Gods displeasure. Then, take the counsel of the Apostle James (*chap. 1.*) *Let the brother of high degree rejoice in that he is made low.* (that is, low in his own thoughts, rich men are usually fuller of high thoughts than they are of earthly treasures) the rich man hath cause to rejoice when he is low in himself, knowing that as the flower of the grass he shall pass away. Riches and rich men pass away of themselves, how much more when God blows upon them and drives them away.

Thirdly, *He overthroweth the mightiness of honour*: Many fortifie themselves with great earthly Titles, but these are but paper wals to the batteries of heaven. Hamans honour among the people, and favour with the Prince could not save him, when God frowned.

Fourthly, *He overthroweth the mightiness of authority*, that's distinct from honour; a man may have great titles, and yet but little authority. Mean men have sometimes great commands, they may have authority over those who are above them in honour. But though the might of authority be in conjunction with the mightiness of honour, the Lord overthroweth it. So that he who could (as the Centurion in the Gospel) say to this man, *Go and he goeth, to another come, and he cometh, to a third, do this and he doth it*, may at last (as our Proverb speaketh) *command his man, and do it himself.* When once commands are slighted,

authority is overthrown. God who gives weight to the word of a man, can also make it light, he shall speak and none regard.

Fifthly, *God overthroweth the mightiness of courage*: He makes the valiant faint, and the man whose heart was like the heart of a lion, to run like a coward at the shaking of a leaf: God who saith to them that are of a *fearful heart, be strong, fear not* (Isa. 35. 4.) *and maketh the feeble to be as David* (Zach. 12. 8.) : his God can say to the strong, be ye afraid; and to him that was as *David*, be thou feeble: He that overthroweth the couragious, can also overthrow courage.

Thus the strength of body, the strength of riches, the strength of honour, the strength of authority, and the strength of courage are all overthrown by the strength of God. Who can conceive how much strength God hath, who is stronger than all these strengths? And as the Lord alwayes overthroweth the mighty, and gets the day of them, when he engageth with them, so he desires to engage with them. Mighty men seem to be some match for God, and the fall of these makes God more known as he is *Almighty*. Hence that of the Prophet (Isa. 2. 12.) *The day of the Lord of hosts shall be upon, Whom?* he doth not say upon the low, weak & poor, but it shall be upon, *every one that is proud and lofty, and upon every one that is lifted up*: What day of the Lord is this? It is the day of the Lords judgment, the day of his wrath, when he contendeth with a people, then he picks out the great ones, chiefly, to contend with. His day *shall be upon all the cedars of Lebanon, and upon all the oaks of Bashan, and upon every fenced wall*, that is, upon men who are in the account of the world tall like cedars, strong like oaks, high like towers, invincible like walls of brass, with these the Lord will be dealing in his day, and (vers. 17.) *The Lord alone shall be exalted in that day*, as if he had said, these men were exalted before, now the Lord overthrowing them, he himself shall be exalted. For the text may be taken two ways, he shall be exalted either as the Agent, that is, it shall appear that he alone hath overthrown these mighty ones: Or secondly, the Lord alone shall be exalted, that is, he will come into the place of those mighty men; these carried in the eye of the world, as the only great ones, now the Lord comes into their place, they shall be exalted no more, his Name shall be exalted, and his only. When God ap-
pears

pears in his greatness, none appear great but he: When he exalts himself, none will pretend to exaltation. The Lord alone shall be exalted in that day.

I shall give you four corollaries or deductions from this proposition, *The Lord overthroweth the mighty.*

First, *Then, fear not the mightiest enemies.* God is Almighty, the weakness of God is stronger than men; seeing God is described overthrowing the mighty, if we keep close to him, we need not fear to be overthrown by the mighty.

Secondly, If the Lord overthroweth the mighty, *Then trust not in the mightiest friends.* When great seconds, and assistants appear on our part, then we think we are safe; but what can mighty men do for us, if the Almighty God be against us? as was further shewed (*Chap. 9. 13.*) *Unless the Lord withdraw his anger, the proud helpers do stoop under him;* the helpers of strength stoop, unless upheld by the strong God. As therefore we ought not to fear the worst of foes, so not to trust upon the best of friends, because they are mighty.

Thirdly, *Let no man rejoice or boast in his own strength,* though that five-fold strength before spoken of, meet in him, yet let him not trust upon it. He that breaks them single can break them combined. A three-fold, yea a five-fold cord, is easily broken by the arm of omnipotency.

Fourthly, (which was toucht, *vers. 18.*) *If God overthrow the mighty, how soon can he overthrow those who have no might?* You that are weak and poor in comparison of the mighty Princes and Nimrods of the world, you (I say) have cause to fear and tremble before the mighty God: As they said, *2 King. 10. 4. Behold two Kings stood not before him, how then shall we?* so we may say much more of the Lord, two Kings, yea hundreds of Kings, Nobles, and men of might have not stood before him, how shall worms, and weaklings wrastle it out, and contend with him?

Verse 20. He removeth away the speech of the trusty, and taketh away the understanding of the aged.

This Verse gives us another act of Gods power, towards the altering and subverting of States and Common-wealths. Kingdoms are much upheld by the eloquence of Orators, and by the wisdom of the ancient. God makes these *two removes* when he would remove the beauty and blessing of a Kingdom. First,

He removeth away the speech of the trusty.

*Labium penitur
pro loque!a.*

The Hebrew is, *He removeth the lips of the trusty*. The same word signifies lips and speech, because the lips are the instrument of speech (*Gen. 11.1.*). *All the earth was of one speech, or of one lip*, that is, they all spake one language. *He removeth the speech of*.

The trusty.

*Amovet sermo-
nem eloquenti-
bus. Jun.*
לְנִאֲמָנִים
אֶרָאָה
*Dixit locutus
elocutus fuit.
Rab. Kinchi.*

The word hath a double reading, according to a double derivation in the Hebrew. For some derive it from a root which signifies to *speake*. Taking it so, the sense is, *He bereaveth Orators of their eloquence*, or (as Mr. Broughton, closer to the letter) *He bereaveth the Orator of lips, He makes them like men dumb or tongue-tied, who were once all voice and tongue*.

Thus *Job* toucheth upon all those evils which hasten the ruine of a people; one whereof, and that a great one, is this, when God takes away speech from men, whose very trade it is to speak. When God threatned to break the staff of *Israel*, he saith, *I will take away the eloquent Orator* (Isa. 3. 3.) *Kingdoms with all their blessings are as much, if not more upheld or cast down by tongues, than they are by hands.*

God is said to remove or take away the speech of the Orator two ways.

First, When he takes the Orators away, his picking such out of counsels by death, hath a sad presage in it, of the approaching funerals of publick prosperity.

Secondly, When though he leaves the speakers, yet he disables them to speak : When though he leaves the Orator, yet he takes away his oratory, so that he cannot deliver himself with any command over the attentions and affections of his hearers: that's the excellency of *oratory* to carry the heart by the ear, to make every sentence perswasive, every word a *nail or a goad*, a nail to fasten resolution, or a goad to quicken unto action. It was said of a *Grecian Orator*, who was also a great souldier, that he thundered and lightned, moved and awakned all when he spake. But if God once *take away the speech of the Orator*, he may speak his hearers into a sleep.

Hence Observe,

First, That ability of speech is a special gift of God.

Pericles (Olympius propter eloquentiam dictus) fulminabat intonabat, confundebat Graciam. Plutarch. in vita Peric.

He

He removeth and taketh it way, therefore he giveth it. (*Exod. 4. 10.*) We find *Moses eloquent only to tell God he was not eloquent*: he ſpeaks very rhetorically to excuſe his ſervice for want of rhetorick. Lord (ſaith he) *I am not eloquent, neither heretofore, nor ſince thou haſt ſpoken unto thy ſervant (neither yeſterday nor to day, that is, not at any time) but I am ſlow of ſpeech, and of a ſlow tongue.* But how doth the Lord answer him? The Lord ſaid unto him, *who hath made mans mouth? As if he had ſaid, Seeing I make the mouth which is the inſtrument of ſpeech, or the ſhop wherein words are made, I alſo can make the mouth eloquent, & give thee words to ſpeak.* The Lord argues further with *Moses, who maketh the dumb?* Is it not I the Lord? I who make the dumb, can make thee ſpeak, and ſpeak eloquently too: I can give thee a flowing tongue. Therefore be not afraid to go on my errand: I who ſend thee, will ſtore thee with language to do the errand about which I ſend thee: *It ſhall be given thee in that ſame hour, what to ſpeak.*

Secondly Obſerve,

Man is not maſter of his own tongue.

God takes away the lip of the Orator. They (*Pſal. 12. 3, 4.*) bragged much of their tongues; ſurely they thought if any thing was their own, their tongues were, they could ſpeak what they liſt, *who is Lord over us?* ſay they, Yet they found a Lord over their tongues. God is Lord of the tongue two ways,

First, Becauſe he will bring every one to an account for his tongue: Thoſe boasters (*Pſal. 12.*) thought themſelves exempted from any ſuch controule. *Our tongues are our own, who is Lord over us?* who hath any thing to do with what we ſpeak? who ſhall audit us for words and ſillables? Yes, there is one will do it to a ſillable. God gives the rule what we ſhall ſpeak, and he will call every one to a reckoning for what he hath ſpoken.

Secondly, God is Lord of the tongue in reference to the power of ſpeech. Man cannot ſpeak what he would, or when he would (*Numb. 23. 11, 12.*) *Balak* had hired *Balaam* to curſe the people of God, and *Balaam* had a good will to it, if ever man had, but *Balak* found *Balaam* in another note, he only publiſhed the glory of *Israel*, and prophesied their higheſt bleſſings. *Balak* was extremely troubled at this; and ſaith, *What haſt thou done unto me? I took thee to curſe mine enemies, and behold thou haſt bleſſed them altogether.* As if he had ſaid, *What*

Balaam? Art not thou master of thy own words? I called thee to curse, and not to bless, didst not thou understand what my business was? I knew Israel was fenced enough and too much with blessings: How is it that when I sent for thee to blast them, that thou hast blessed them altogether, art thou brib'd on their side? or knowest thou not that I am able to promote thee to honour? speak, man, the sudden fate of this numerous people, and fear not? why hast thou gone so contrary to my design? What saith Balaam? He answered and said, Must I not take heed to speak that which the Lord hath put in my mouth? Balaam seems to reply from his conscience. 'Tis the duty of every man to take heed to speak that which the Lord puts in his mouth. But Balaam was only overpowr'd; if God would have suffered him to speak what Balaam had desired, his own conscience had never stood in his way: He that opened his Asses mouth a little before to reprove his madness, now shut his mouth from uttering that wickedness. The Lord (saith he) hath blessed them, and I cannot reverse it: as if he had said, I have been tugging at it, and labouring to curse them, but I cannot do it. The Lord restrained his heart, and bound his tongue, that he could not form a curse, and now he puts it off with this fine language, Must I not take heed to speak that which the Lord hath put in my mouth? No man ever came with fuller purpose to curse the Israel of God than Balaam did, but his tongue was not his own, he could not.

So much upon that rendring of the text, *He bereaves Orators of their eloquence.*

לְאֵמָנִים

אמאד: JON
qua est con-
stantia fidelitas,
stabilitas in
dictis & pro-
missis.

Qui digni sunt
quibus fides ha-
beat. Auth.
Carena.

Ve translate, *He removeth away the speech of the trusty:* And so the word is derived from a root, which signifies constancy, fidelity, truth, stability in word or deed: Men so qualified, are worthy to be trusted, and only they. But though it is easie to say, who a *trusty man* is, yet it may be doubted still who is here meant by these *trusty men*: Yet considering *Jobs* scope, we may well conclude that he speaks of men either actually trusted, or worthy to be trusted with the management of publick affairs. Some *Magistrates* are not only *Governors* over the people, but *Feoffees* for them. Thus the Free-holders of *England* in their respective places, chuse the *Members of the House of Commons* in *Parliament*, as their *Trustees*, and commit the protection of their estates and liberties into their hand: Of such *Trusty men*, or of *men thus Trused*, we may well interpret this text. And as

of these Counsellours whom the people chuse, and Trust: So also of those whom Kings and Princes chuse for, and Trust with great offices and employments.

But how doth God remove away the speech of such men: What? doth he make them speechless, or strike them dumb? he can do that; but here (I conceive) the removing of speech may be taken two ways, first, only, for an abating of the ability of speech; so that they who would, cannot give counsel, either with that clearnesse of judgement, or freedome of language, which they have sometimes shewed. Secondly, For the changing or turning of the tenour of their speech. When a man speaks unlike himself, contrary to what he hath spoken, when he speaks as if he were not the *same man, then his speech is removed.* VVhen a man, who once spake for the truth of God, speaks against it: VVhen he that once spake for the rights, and just liberties of men, is now heard speaking against them: VVhen they who in every speech were wont to advance those counsels which tended to the peace and safety of Kingdoms, shall upon all emergencies speak that which doth but lengthen out their trouble and danger, Then know *the speech of the trusty is removed.* *The speech is never removed till the heart be. The minde is first changed, and then the words.* As the manner of speaking shews of what countrey we are, *Thou art a Galilean, and thy speech bewrayeth thee:* so the matter which is spoken, discovers of what part we are. *We may say to many, you are thus or thus, for your speech bewrayeth you: and to some, You are removed from the cause you once appeared in, for your speech is removed: you have certainly turn'd tables, and change your interest, for your language is changed, and your discourse runs counter to all you did before.*

This is the removing of speech.

But how can we attribute this to God? I answer, God changes or removes the speech of the trusty, not by making them unconstant and unfaithful, but by leaving them to their own unfaithfulness and unconstancy: Every man (even the best of men) have a seed of unfaithfulness, or a principle of apostacy in them, and if God leave them to themselves, they are quickly turned aside. *No man knows what his heart will do, till he is tryed.*

The time of temptation is the time of discovery. Changes
in

in the providence of God, make the changeableneſs of mens mindes, both viſible in their actions, and audible in their ſpeeches. For

This change or remove of ſpeech, ariſeth two waies. Sometimes from fear, Some are ſurpriſed and arreſted with dreadful fore-caſts, what will become of them, and their eſtates, what of their wives and children, if they ſtand to former profeſſions and engagements. *Fear is a very bad Counſellour.* Fear hath removed the ſpeech of the *truſty* more than once.

Secondly, The ſpeech of the *truſty* is removed through hopes and gifts. Expectation will change a mans opinion, much more will ſomewhat in profeſſion. How many have loſt or alter'd their tongues by being felt in the hand (*Deut. 16. 19.*) *A gift doth blind the eyes of the wiſe, and pervert the words of the righteous,* That expreſſion in *Moses* of *perverting words*, doth excellently answer and expound this in *Job* of *removing ſpeech*. And where-as *Job* ſaith only that *the ſpeech of the truſty is removed*, *Adoſes* ſaith, *the words of the righteous are perverted*. He that was right and went right before, even his words are perverted by a gift. The ancient adage ſaid of ſuch, *The ox is upon their tongue*, that is, money or worldly reſpects hath ſilenced them: The reaſon of that ſpeaking was becauſe the figure of an ox was auciently ſtampt upon their money; we ſay the *black ox* treads upon ſome mens toes, we may ſay, the white, or the red ox treads ſo hard upon many mens tongues, that either they will not ſpeak at all, or not as they did. We read that *Demosthenes*, a great Orator, being to ſpeak upon a buſineſs of conſequence, came to the bar with a ſcarf or miſſer about his neck, and ſaid he was not able to ſpeak, he was troubled with a *Quincey*; to which ſome of the wits of the time, answered, That *the Orator was ſick of the money, not of the quincey*. Bribes had ſwel'd his throat, that he could not plead. Thus the ſpeech of the *truſty* is removed, when ſome unrighteous bias will not ſuffer them to ſpeak what they ſhould, or carries them to ſpeak what they ſhould not.

Non Angina
ſed Argentan-
gna correptum
Oratorem di-
cimus Plutar.

Yet further, Some underſtand *the truſty*, of (men truſted with the ſouls of men) the Priests and Prophets of thoſe times. The word may be well tranſlated, *truth-speakers*, or *mefſengers of truth*, God removeth their ſpeech.

First,

First, When they whom he had sent with promises of mercy in their mouths, are now commanded to thunder out threatnings and educations of his wrath, when they to whom God hath said, *Comfort ye, comfort ye my people*, have now no messages, but sad ones, no visions, but of amazement and desolation.

Committat promissiones suas falsas per prophetas, in comminationes, vel efficit ut qui laudat pollicetur solent nihil jam nisi triste praedicant, Philip:

Secondly, The Lord removeth away the speech of these *trusty ones*, by leaving a people to the speech of those who are *untrusty*. When the Jews would not receive the faithful Prophets, God gave them up to the teachings of false Prophets. Speech is removed, when the speakers are thus changed.

Thirdly, God changeth or removeth the speech of *Truth-speakers*, by forbidding them to speak. God doth sometimes silence the sincerest Prophets. When men will not obey what they speak, God will not let them speak (*Ezek. 3. 26.*) *I will make thy tongue cleave to the roof of thy mouth, that thou shalt be dumb, and shalt not be to them a reprover, for they are a rebellious house.* As men when their sins is at the highest, say to the Prophets, *Prophecie no more*; so when judgment is at the highest, God saith unto the Prophets, *Prophecie not*; The wrath of God is extremely hot, when flattering prophets are sent to cry, *Peace, peace, where there is no peace*, and to daub up sinful men with untempered mortar: 'Tis also as hot, if not hotter, when God puts a bar upon the lips of his faithful Prophets, that they shall no longer denounce his war against sin, or convince the sinner. *The peace of a people cannot be long liv'd, when once the speech of the trusty is thus or thus removed.*

Take two brief deductions from all.

First, *There is no depending upon the faithfulness of man.* God removeth away the speech of the trusty. Surely men of low degree are vanity, and men of high degree are a lye (*Psal. 62. 9.*) they that have done and spoken right to day, may speak and do wrong to morrow. *Man is a mutable creature in his qualification, as well as in his constitution.* Both his natural, and his moral endowments are as mortal as his life is. And in many these die and go to the grave before their Masters.

Secondly, If the speech of the trusty be so often removed, Then, we must judge of what is spoken by a standing rule, not by the person speaking. It is an evil, and a sore disease under the sun, that good counsels are refused, because some have a prejudice against the person: And it is a worse evil, when all, even evil

counsels are received upon the good esteem we have of the person. We must look to the matter, not to the man, both in the things of God, and in the things of men; there is neither wisdom nor safety in taking any thing upon trust, especially when we hear that God in judgment *removes away the speech of the trusty*. Whosoever speaks, if he speaks truth, it ought to be embraced. And though an *Achitophel*, an Oracle of wisdom on earth, or Angel from heaven speak what is false, 'tis our duty to reject it. The wisest men are not alwayes wise, neither do the prudent always understand their way. The holiest men are not holy in all things, neither do they who are real friends to truth, speak all truth. *Paul* (Gal. 2.) found *Peter* faltering in his speech, and giving not only counsel, but example that was not right. The ancient Fathers, men of profound judgment and understanding in the Scriptures, have erred, and misdelivered the mind of God. Whole Councils (which are a collection of wise and learned men) have had their mistakes. We may conclude as the Prophet doth (*Isa. 2. 22.*) *Cease ye from man, whose breath is in his nostrils, for wherein is he to be accounted of?* The honest and the wise, the holy and the just, the eloquent and the trusty, are not always to be trusted, For, *God removeth away the speech of the trusty, who (possibly) may be all these.*

And taketh away the understanding of the aged.

*Sapientes senes
vocantur licet
sint juvenes,
propterea quod
sapientia ut-
plurimum in se-
nibus invenitur.*
Rab. Dav.

Understanding is so proper to the aged, or men of years, that an understanding young man, deservedly draws upon himself the honour and account of many years; *as an old man very foolish is young-old, so a young man very wise is old-young.*

Age ordinarily heightens understanding, and experience maturates and improves natural parts, as was shewed at the twelfth verse: yet they whose understandings have had the greatest advantages of experience, may act without understanding, yea against, not only experience, but reason. *Some mens understandings are enfeebled with age, and themselves are old children rather than old men, that's the judgement which this text holds out unto us.*

□□□
*Significat gu-
stare, inde chi-
noscere judica-
re, metaphora
ducta a sensu
ad animum.*

The word which we render *understanding*, signifies to *taste*, or *the sense of tasting*, and it is frequently translated from the sense to the understanding, because (as was shewed at the 11th. verse) the understanding tastes a doctrine, or a proposition, whether it be

be true or false, as the mouth or pallet tastes meat, whether it be sweet or bitter. This word is very comprehensive, signifying (as some critical Rabbinists teach us) counsel, judgment, wisdom, reason, both the argument and decree, upon which any thing is done, as also the discretion with which it is done. Grammarians tell us that the due and proper accent of every word, is in the Hebrew called [*Tagnan*] because the accent doth give as it were a right taste of the sense, and so leads to a right understanding of the word. When the holy finger invites all to that glorious banquet (*Psal. 24. 8.*) *O taste and see that the Lord is good*, he means, understand how good he is. The same inspired heart praise in this language (*Psal. 110. 56.*) *Teach me good judgment and knowledge*, that is, give me a true taste and relish of heavenly truth, (*Prov. 11. 22.*) *As a jewel in a swines snout, so is a fair woman without discretion or understanding. Beauty without brains is a loathsome deformity.* In the book of *Ezra*, the Chief or President of a Council, who ordereth and moderates the whole proceeding there, is thus expressed, *The Master of Taste.* He had need to have a quick internal palate, who must taste all men, and all matters, as the President of a Council must.

This taste, this understanding, or whatsoever moral excellency comes within the compass of this word, God taketh away sometimes from the aged, or from men (who for that service) are of the most perfect age.

Hence Observe,

First, *Our understandings are at the dispose of God.*

He gives understanding to the simple, and he can take it from the subtle. *Old men are not always wise:* Not only because some never had wisdom, but because many loose the wisdom which once they had. And this is a loss which we sustain from no hand but the hand of God. Man may take out riches and worldly estates from us, and make us poor, but God only can take our understandings from us, and make us fools. Men can empty our purses, but God, and God only can empty our brains.

Observe Secondly,

That when the Lord will destroy a people, he takes away the understanding of the ancient.

Heathens said, *God bereaves them of understanding, whom he designs for destruction.* Now as this is a sad presage of ruine to the party himself, so likewise of ruine to those who have relation

Hinc Sept. intelligentiam, Rab. Moyf. probationem. Rab. Mord. Decretum. Pagn. Consilium, Tyg. Judicium, Regia Discretionem, Hebraeus apud Cajet. saporem reddit. Hac vox in Grammatica fig. accentum cuiuslibet disti-
onis, eo quod det cibonam, gustum & sensum ad intelligendam sapientiam. Rab. Mard.

כעל טע
Præses consilij.

Quas perdere vult Iupiter hos dementat.

tion to him. And as it is a judgement upon a people when Princes refuse the aged, and follow young Counsellours: So it is the same, if not a greater judgement upon a people, when God takes wisdom from old Counsellours, and leaves them to act like young ones. A young man without understanding cannot do so much hurt as he that is aged. His youth leaves his advices under question and discussion. But when old and experienced Counsellours, who have travelled in affairs many years, and gave got the reputation of wise men, prove like empty casks without any filling of wisdom, they quickly undoe all with authority, and unsuspected. No marvel then if God put this among his marvellous judgements (*Isa. 29. 14.*) *Therefore, behold, I will proceed to do a marvellous work amongst this people, even a marvellous work and a wonder.* See how attention is raised, here is, *Behold*, and then, *Behold I will do a marvellous work*, and then, *a marvellous work and a wonder.* And what is it? *The wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent men shall be hid.* No man wonders to see some men without wisdom, they were never guilty of it: But to see wise men unwise, and prudent men (such I mean as have given long proof of their prudence) without understanding, here's a wonder. As we say, young men may dye, but old men must; so young men may be wise, but old men should: and those old men, who have once been thought wise, are seldom thought otherwise of, though God have indeed taken away their wisdom. *Now there are no fools do so much mischief, as they who are thought to be wise.* A fool that is wise in his own conceit only, endangers no body but himself, for no body will trust him. But a fool that is wise in the conceit of others, may endanger thousands, for all are ready, not only to trust, but adore his *foolship*. It would not be so great a judgment to have understanding taken from the aged, if the reputation of it were not still left upon them. It is a soar scourge to a land, when God as the Prophet threatens (*Is. 3. 2.*) takes away that staff, *the prudent and the ancient*, that is, young men who are wise, as well as ancient wise men. But it is a soarer scourge, when he takes away *the prudence of the ancient*: So that those ancient men, who used to be prudent, become light and precipitate in their counsels. When stayed and sober-paced men, run headlong, all, both things and persons are like to run headlong with them. By such means foolish counsels, the wise and just

just God brings the honourable into contempt, & the strong to weakness, and when all this is done, there is nothing wanting for the ruine of a people, but their actual ruining. The next verse shews us God doing both these.

Verse 21. *He poureth contempt upon Princes, and weakeneth the strength of the mighty.*

This verse (I say) is a continuation of the former argument : giving us yet more prognosticks of the approaching ruine of Kingdoms and Common-wealths. He had said (verse 19th) *He leadeth Princes away spoiled*, now, *He poureth contempt upon Princes*. As understanding is most proper for the aged, so is honour for Princes, and strength for the mighty. God, to make his judgements exact, punisheth them in that which is most peculiar to them. *He poureth contempt upon Princes, &c.*

He poureth contempt.

That is, he makes them very contemptible. To pour out any liquid, implieth plenty of it; as the pouring out of the spirit, a plentiful giving of the spirit. When the spirit was poured out (Act. 2.) The by-standers said, *these men are full of new wine*: No faith the Apostle, *these men are not drunken* (as ye suppose) but this is that which was spoken by the Prophet Joel, *And it shall come to pass in the last daies* (saith God) *that I will pour out of my spirit upon all flesh*, that is, they shall have abundance of my Spirit. So, Isa. 44. 3. *I will pour out water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground*, that is, they shall have much spiritual refreshing, who now are quite destitute of it: such are there shadowed out by the thirsty and dry ground. Again, (Zech. 12. 10.) *I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplication*; And as pouring, applied to the spirit, implies a great measure of the spirit, so in any other matter. Psal. 42. 4. *When I remember these things, I pour out my soul in me*: The pouring out of the soul, is the pouring out of sorrows; and to pour out sorrow, is to be exceeding sorrowful: So the pouring out of fury, notes an excessive fury, Ezek. 20. 33. And when David as a Type of Christ complaineth (Psal. 22. 14.) *I am poured out like water,*

*Sole effusio
magnam profusi
liquoris copiam
denotare.*
Pined

his meaning is, all my bodily ſtrength and comforts are departed. Whatſoever is poured out, poured in, or poured upon us, be it good or evil, we have enough of it. Much contempt is their portion, upon whom contempt is poured. Here it is poured upon them, upon whom a little is very much.

Upon Princes.

Princes are veſſels of civil honour, yea many Princes are found of civil honour, they pour honour upon others, how great a turn is it, when contempt is poured on them, and they filled with diſhonour! Some are ſo contemptible, that they are not ſenſible of contempt: but nothing touches Princes ſo ſoon as contempt doth. 'Tis worſe to them to be deſpiſed, then to be deſtroyed, and they can eaſier part with their lives then with their honour. Here then is the very pinch of Princes, contempt, eſpecially if they be Princes of Noble and Princely ſpirits: Such are pointed at in this word, which properly ſignifies *munificent*, liberal and free-hearted, Princes are, or ſhould be ſo. Liberality or munificence is the vertue and honour of Princes. Such a free Princely ſpirit God expects from the meanest of his people toward his ſervice (*Exod. 35. 5.*) *Take ye from amongſt you offering unto the Lord, whoſoever is of a willing heart, let him bring it.* A true worſhipper is not thruſt and driven on by an outward written law, but finds a law written in his own heart: He (as it is ſaid of *Araamah*) like a King gives to the King. *David* prayeth, *Uphold me with thy free ſpirit.* (*Pſal. 51. 14.*) 'Tis this word, the ſpirit of the Lord is a Noble, free, Princely ſpirit. It is free two wayes, 1. Subjectively, or in it ſelf, giving out freely and liberally to us. 2 It is free in the effects, *Where the ſpirit of the Lord is, there is liberty*, it makes us free. They who have received this ſpirit, ſerve the Lord freely, and judge his ſervice freedom. Hence (*Pſal. 110. 3.*) *all the people of God are expreſſed by this word, a Princely people; Thy people ſhall be willing in the day of thy power*, they ſhall be willing as Princes, liberal as Kings, they ſhall give up ſoul, body, name, ſtate, all to Jeſus Chriſt; they who have felt the day of divine power, are not acted by humane power, by the coercions and ordinances of men; they are under no contraint, but that of the love of Chriſt. Worldly Princes have that in their name, which the Saints have in their nature. And becauſe many worldly Princes have ſo little of that

נָדִיב *Liberales, munificos denotat, quod liberalitas & beneficentia principis maxime debeat.*

Nadib eſt homini liberi ſpiritus, non inuoluntate & coactis ſed ſua ſe voluntate impellens ad honeſta & laudibilia, Merc.

that in their natures, which they have fully in their name, true Nobleness, I mean, and freeness of spirit to do good, and defend those who are good; therefore God poureth contempt upon them.

Hence Observe,

First, *If Princes use not their honour for Christ, Christ will pour dishonour upon Princes.*

1 Sam. 2. 30. *Them that honour me, I will honour, and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed.* When Princes act unlike themselves, God makes them unlike themselves, vile and contemptible. The Apostle speaks of himself and of his fellow Apostles in (1 Cor. 4. 9.) *I think that God hath set forth us the Apostles last, as it were appointed unto death, for we are made a spectacle unto the world, and to Angels, and to men.* As the Lord suffers his Saints to have contempt poured upon them by the world, and to be made a spectacle of scorn; so he himself poureth contempt upon the greatest of worldly Princes, he setteth them as upon a Theatre or open Stage, that all may behold and look upon them, and say, Thus hath God done with the men who had no delight to honour him. *Since thou wast precious in my sight* (saith God of his meanest people, Isa. 43. 4.) *thou hast been honourable*; that is, altogether honourable in thy self, and honoured by all men who know thy worth: and when once highest Princes are vile in the sight of God, they become dishonourable, even altogether dishonourable in themselves, as also in the eye and esteem of all men who know their unworthiness. And when Princes are thus become dishonourable, they are within a step of becoming miserable: The Psalmist had no sooner said, *He poured contempt upon Princes*, but presently it follows, *and causeth them to wander in the wilderness where there is no way*, (Psal. 107. 40.) When Princes are under contempt, they are uncertain of their course, they are entangled in their counsels, they are in a maze, and know neither their way, nor their end, but are at their wits end, and at their honours end, both together. We have a Prophecy of a glorious Kingdom (Isa. 32. 1.) *Behold a King shall reign in righteousness, and Princes shall rule in judgement, &c.* Then (vers. 5.) *The vile person shall no more be called liberal, or Prince.* Nabal shall not glory in this title *Nadib*. Nabal is a fool, and *Nadib* is a Prince. In that Kingdom, fools or vile persons shall no more be honoured nor adored like golden Idols. Men shall be known what they are, and called what they deserve. Then, Princes

Princes who miſapply their power, and reſuſe to be *nurſing Fathers* to the Church, then, Princes who bring not their glory to the new *Jeruſalem*, and ſubmit not their crowns unto the Lamb, even all they who are a terror to the good, and praiſe them who do evil, *ſhall no more be named gracious Lords*, but ſhall go forth with everlaſting ſhame (in ſtead of a crown) upon their heads. Swelling titles will be no Sanctuary againſt thoſe viols of contempt, ready to be poured out upon all contemnners of Chriſt, and oppoſers of his throne for ever.

Secondly Obſerve,

They that have received much honour from God, ſhall receive much ſhame from him, if they abuſe their honour.

Proportional to the honour they have received will the contempt be which they ſhall receive. God doth not drop, but pour honour upon Princes, therefore he will not drop, but pour contempt upon them by whole buckets full, it ſhall come down as a ſweeping rain. As they who have had, not only as *Moses* ſpeaks of his, *doctrine dropping as the rain, and ſpeech diſtilling as the dew*, but Goſpel knowledge pouring down upon them, theſe ſhall not have ſome drops of anger, but God will pour out his anger and his fury upon them, if they are unfruitful, or bring not forth fruit meet for his (their Maſters) uſe. They that have had but a drop or two of the word, ſhall have comparatively but a drop of judgement. That's the reaſon why it ſhall be eaſier for *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*, for *Tyrs* and *Sidon* then for *Bethſaida* and *Choraſin*, at the day of Judgement, *Matth. 11. 12.* Juſtice looks to the meaſure, as well as to the matter of ſin, in pronouncing puniſhments. *He poureth contempt upon Princes.*

And weakeneth the ſtrength of the mighty.

The Hebrew is, *He weakeneth the Girdle of the mighty.* The Vulgar and the Septuagint are very bold with this text, in their tranſlations, giving a ſenſe hardly reconcilable to the Original. *He releiveth thoſe that are oppreſſed*, ſaith the one, *He bealeth thoſe that are humble*, ſaith the other: Both wide enough from our reading, *He weakeneth the ſtrength of the mighty.* The word ſignifies Rivers and Torrents, which run with a mighty force.

He

*Humiles autem
ſanavi ſepr.
סִימָן
Sunt aqua cum
impetu fluentes.*

He looſeneth the ſtrength or Girdle of the mighty; the ſame word notes a girdle and ſtrength, becauſe a girdle cauſeth ſtrength, or is an advantage to put out our ſtrength; for though now men uſually ungird themſelves when they go about ſtrong labour, yet in thoſe times it was not ſo; *Job* ſpeaks according to the cuſtom of thoſe Eaſtern Countries, who (wearing long garments) when they prepared for travail or labour, girded up themſelves, that ſo they might be more nimble and expeditious. *Job* had ſaid, verſ. 19. *He overthroweth the mighty*; here he ſaith, *He weakeneth the ſtrength of the mighty*. There is a difference between theſe two; There, *he bringeth a greater power, and ſo overthroweth them*. As 'tis ſaid in the Goſpel, though a ſtrong man armed keep the houſe, yet when a ſtronger comes, he ſpoils him. But here 'tis ſaid, *He weakeneth the ſtrength of the mighty*, that is, *He abateth or draweth out their ſtrength*. As the waters of a great River, being drawn out by Sluces, the ſtrength of the River is weakened; So the Lord drains and draws out the ſtrength of mighty men, and weakens them. It is ſtoried, that when *Cyrus* beſieged *Babylon*, which was encompaſſed with a mighty River, the River *Euphrates*, he made many Sluces and Cuts, which fetched out all the water from the River, and ſo ſurprized them in the height of ſecurity, they thinking the place impregnable, and having alſo a prophecy, *That the City ſhould never be taken till the River proved their enemy*. Thus the Lord, he ſluceth out the ſtrength of the ſtrongest men, their perſonal ſtrength, the ſtrength of their arms and legs, their relational ſtrength, the ſtrength of their friends, allies, and confederates; ſo ſome underſtand this place: There is a girdle of ſtrength wherewith one Nation is tyed to another, ſuch are Leagues of amity and mutual aid: The Lord weakeneth this ſtrength alſo, and makes them who were a help, a hurt unto their Neighbours. He ſaith, *Gird your ſelves and ye ſhall be broken in pieces, gird your ſelves and ye ſhall be broken in pieces take counſel together and it ſhall come to nought*, *Iſa.* 8. 9, 10. *The ſtrength of all creatures associated, is too weak for the ſingle ſtrength of God.*

Hence Obſerve,

All the ſtrength of man is at the pleaſure and diſpoſe of God.

He overthroweth ſtrength, not only by overpowering it, but by unpowring it. He can always bring more ſtrength than we have,

Two Significant non fortitudinem ſolumentem cingulum; ſiquid, in vtrium ſedes in lumbis qui cingulo munitur, vel quod vires auget, cinili enim robuſtiores ſunt, et habiliores ad opus faciendum. Dru. Eos qui oppreſſi ſunt relevans Vulg.

or leſſon the ſtrength which he have. As we cannot maſter Gods ſtrength, ſo we are not maſters of our own. *Sampſons* ſtrength was a terrour to the *Philiftins*, but as ſoon as God was gone from him, his ſtrength was gone, and then they deſpiſed him, who before trembled at him; and called him out to make them ſport, whole preſence had ſo often ſpoiled their ſport. How many mighty men hath God weakned? How many invincible Armies and Armadoes of men (as proud men have ſtiled them) hath God conquered? How many potent Kingdoms and Common-wealths hath God reduced to confuſed heaps? *Once hath God ſpoken, yea twice have I heard thus, that power belongeth unto God, alſo unto thee, O Lord, belongeth mercy* (Pſal. 62. 11, 12.) 'Tis ſafeſt for uſ to fly to this mercy, ſeeing we can neither fly from, nor ſtand before this power. *Thou haſt a might arme. O God, ſtrong is thy hand, and high is thy right hand*, Pſal. 80. 13. The weakneſs of God is ſtronger than man: And before God all mans ſtrength is turned into weakneſs. All the inſtances which *Job* hath already given, prove this great truth, *That with God is wiſdom and ſtrength*; and leſt any ſhould think it is not yet proved enough, he is ready in the two next verſes to give us, yet a further, and (if a clearer may be) a clearer proof.

J O B Chap. 12. Vers. 22. 23.

He discovereth deep things out of darkness, and bringeth out to light the shadow of death.

He increaseth the Nations, and destroyeth them: he enlargeth the Nations and straitneth them again.

WE have seen, in the former context, how large a testimony Job hath given of the power and wisdom of God; producing many proofs which speak both no less than infinite. And because those were particular and personal, therefore he giveth us (in these two verses) two more which are general, and National. *He discovereth deep things out of darkness.* He increaseth the Nations, &c. Here's providence unlocking secrets, opening those things which were sealed up, these acts are attended with suitable effects, *The increasing and destroying, the enlarging and straitening of the Nations.*

Vers. 22. *He discovereth deep things out of darkness.*

The word properly signifies to unfold that which is wrapped up, or to manifest that which is hidden. Deep places are hidden places. God discovereth those things which are most hidden, even deep things out of darkness: *Deep things, and darkness* are put together, because that which is deep is dark. The further we remove from the Fountain of light, the more darkness prevails over us; and therefore every degree of deepness adds a degree of darkness, all depth being downward, and so a departure from the Sun. *In the beginning darkness was upon the face of the deep,* (Gen. 1. 1.) but darkness is always in the bottom of the deep. *He discovereth deep things out of darkness,* that is, the remotest, lowest, and most retired depths. These deep things may be referred to two heads.

There are deep things of God; and deep things of men.

The deep things of God are, First his thoughts (Psalm. 92. 5.) *O Lord, how great are thy works? and thy thoughts are very deep:* so deep, that all the line of mans understanding is not able to sound or fathom them. The thoughts of God are his decrees and counsels, he doth not think to resolve, but his thoughts are his

נִלְהָ אֶמְלָה
De revelatione
occultorum pro-
pria usurpatur.
Profunda tene-
bris obdusa et
operta sunt.
Fined.

resolutions. The thoughts of God are so deep, that the Apostle (with a mixture of amazement and adoration) cries out, *O the depth* (Rom. 11:33.) Secondly, The deep things of God are his word, containing either Doctrines to be believed, or Prophecies to be fulfilled. The word of God hath its shallows, and it hath its depths: there a Lamb may wade, and there an Elephant may swim.

Secondly, There are deep things of men; which are of divers sorts.

1. His word is deep. Though the words of most men float upon their tongues, yet Solomon assures us that, *The words of a mans* (that is, as the word imports, of an excellent mans) *mouth are as deep waters* (Prov. 18.4.) A wise prudent man speaks Oracles, and when you hear the sound, and understand the Grammatical sense, you do not presently reach the depth of what is spoken. As some speak shallowly, so they hear shallowly; they dive not into those deep waters which flow from a wise mans mouth. He speaks wisdom in a mystery, or mysteries of wisdom.

2. There is a depth in a man, deeper than his words, and that is the *depth of his thoughts* (Psal. 64.6.) *Both the inward thought of every one of them, and the heart is deep.* The heart is often put for the inward thought, but here, the inward thought is an act of the heart, and the heart is the faculty, or power of thinking: *Counsel in the heart of a man is like deep water* (Prov. 20.5.) The heart of man is a great deep, so deep that none can find it out but God himself, Jer. 17. 10. *I the Lord search the heart, &c. What man* (saith the Apostle, 1 Cor. 2.11.) *knoweth the things of a man* (that is, those things which lie in the heart of man) *but the spirit of a man which is in him.* Some men flatter themselves that God himself cannot find out the things of their spirit: Hence that woe in the Prophet (Isa. 29.15.) *Woe unto them that seek deep to hide their Counsel from the Lord.* Doubtless they had some hopes to hide their counsel from God, else they would never have sought to hide them. They shewed themselves foolish enough in seeking to hide them, but they had proclaimed themselves more fools in seeking to hide them, if they had been convinced they could not. But though no depth of mans heart can hide his counsel from God, yet many men have depth enough in their hearts, and to spare, to hide their counsels from men.

3. There

3. There is in a man a depth of Doctrine or Opinion; which is also called the *depth of Satan* (Rev. 2. 24.) *As many as have not known the depths of Satan*: Those depths of Satan were the dark opinions, and false Doctrines of Seducers: These called their opinions depths or profundities: and the holy Ghost addeth an Epithete, *depths of Satan*. As if he had said, you call your opinions depths, and so they are, but they are such depths as Satan hath brought out of Hell, they are the whisperings and hissings of that Serpent, not the inspirations of God. The Doctrine of Antichrist (that great Merchant of Error) is called a *mystery of iniquity*, (2 Thes. 2. 7.) A mystery is a truth shut up, or lying in the deep; The deep and dark mysteries of the wicked, will God reveal, *vers. 8.* For he *discovereth deep things out of darkness*.

Darkness may be taken two ways. There is natural darkness, which is only the privation of natural light: and there is a metaphorical darkness, which is the privation of moral light. This darkness is in many through their ignorance; and this darkness is made by others through their knowledge. The infinite knowledge of God makes a darkness to hide his ways and counsels in, and so doth the knowledge of men. They keep their projects and purposes under the veils and visors of specious pretences, and studied secrecies. Out of all this darkness God discovers deep things.

The latter clause of the verse is but an heightning of this, *He bringeth out to light the shadow of death*.

Shadow of death; is taken two ways.

First, For extream danger.

Secondly, For extream darkness.

For extream danger, *Psal. 23. 4.* *Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, that is, in deadly danger, yet I will fear no evil.*

But here, *shadow of death*, is but for extream darkness; the Grave is a place of darkness, and things that are buried lie in the dark. (*Job 34. 22.*) *There is no darkness nor shadow of death, where the workers of iniquity may hide themselves*, that is, the workers of iniquity cannot be hid in the thickest darkness. The shadow of death is the highest, the most superlative degree of thickest darkness: As if *Job* had said, God doth not only bring deep things out of darkness, but the deepest things out of the

greatest darkness, out of that darkness that is as deep and dark as the Grave.

When counsels lie so deep, that the persons who have laid them, have not so much as any jealousy they shall be discovered; when counsels lie so deep that others have no hope to ever they should be discovered; yea then the Lord discovereth them, and this is to bring out to light the shadow of death.

Hence Observe,

First in general, *All things are known unto God.*

He that makes all things known, must needs know all things: and he that makes those things known, which are most unknown, cannot but know these things which are easily known. He that can expound a Riddle, can tell the meaning of a plain saying; and he that discovers deep things out of darkness, cannot but see those things that lie in the open Sun. Unless God were infinite in knowledge, he could not make these things known. (*Eccles. 7. 24.*) *That which is far off and exceeding deep, who can find it out?* The wise man sends a challenge to the wise men of the world, to find out the wisdom of God: that's the thing which is far off, not only from our senses, but from our understanding. That's it which is exceeding deep. Deep, deep as the Original expresseth it, deep to Men, deep to Angels, and too deep for both. Who can find this out? no man can find any thing of it by his own light: and there are none who receive light to find it all out. God is light, and he dwells in light: and as he hath no darkness at all in him, so nothing is dark to him. He perfectly knows his own creating wisdom: *Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight, but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do.* Many things are covered as to the eye of the world; they have Masks and Clouds cast over them, which eyes of flesh cannot see through, but these are all naked before the eye of God; yea they are as manifest and open to his eye, as a body is when dissected by the hand of a skilful Anatomist; he sees our bowels, and knows whether we are sound at heart or no. It is not the fairness of the skin, the cleanness of the outside, will deceive him; if there be any spots upon the Spirit, he discerns them, God needeth none to tell him what is in the heart of man, he makes his way into the depths of that darkness with his own eye.

Observe Secondly,

As God knows deep things so he makes them known.

What is always open to himself, he sometimes revealeth unto man. God discovers both the deep things which himself or man doth or speaketh.

First, He revealeth the deep things which himself speaketh. Unless God expound his own word, all our glosses will but corrupt it: For, *No Prophecie of Scripture is of any private interpretation* (2 Pet. 2. 20.) *by private interpretation*, the Apostle means not the interpretation of one or of a few private men, for possibly, one or a few, and he or they not invested with any publike Commission, may give a true sense of Scripture, when many, and they called to a publike office, mistake and go wrong. But by private interpretation, he brands that Comment which flows from a mans own brain or phancy, without the consent of other Scriptures, or the testings of the Spirit. No Scripture, whether Doctrinal or Prophetical, is of any such private, that is, humane Interpretation. Man with all his wit, learning, and parts, cannot interpret the word of God, only the spirit of God can, or they can who are assisted by the spirit.

*Propriam in
te:pretationem
non ppont
communi sive
publica sed ad-
venitium Spi-
ritus sancti do-
num, ei solertia,
vel ei ingenij
vigori qui fit a
natura homini-
bus quantumvis
ingeniosis in-
stitus Bez.*

So much the Text in Peter now cited holds out clearly in the letter, and yet some of the Learned give another exposition of it. For the words shew us rather the authority and original of the Scriptures, than the way of their Interpretation. The Apostles Scope being to prove that the Prophets did not declare their own private opinions, but the mind of God in what they spake. And that therefore the word of Prophecie, as the Apostle adviseth in the former verse, is to be heeded carefully. The words following lead us altho to the same sense (vers. 21.) *For the prophecie came not in the old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.* The Prophets were the interpreters of the mind of God to the people, not the Messengers of their own minds. The false Prophets vended their own dreams, and ran of their own heads before they were sent, therefore their Prophecies were of a *private Interpretation*, that is, they opened only that to the people, which themselves were Authors of, so did not the true Prophets. They said, *Thus saith the Lord*, or as Paul, *We have received of the Lord, that which we deliver unto you.* From all it appears that the Apostle is speaking of the pedigree, not of the Exposition of Prophetical Scriptures. Yet the truth is as evident for the one as for the

*Sensus Petri
Apostoli hic vi-
detur esse, Pro-
phetas non sua
mentis s'nsu
edidisse sed su-
isse interpretes
consilij divini,
vel prophetas
non suam sed
Dei mentem
h'ntibus expo-
suisse Camer.
Myroth.
Evang.*

other.

other. As the Scripture it self is not the interpretation of mans mind, so neither is any true interpretation of Scripture from the meer mind of man. *The spirit of God (in man) searcheth all things, even the deep things of God;* 1 Cor. 2. 10. And without the spirit, man cannot find any thing of God, no not that which lyeth uppermost or most in sight.

Again, He revealeth the deep things which himself doth. *Surely the Lord will do nothing but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the Prophets* (Amos 3. 7.) The secret intended by the Prophet, was the decree and purpose of God to bring evil upon that Land, to take away the voyce of mirth and gladness, and to make them an astonishment, an hissing, and a perpetual desolation. The secret of such decrees God reveals to his Prophets, that they may warn the people, either to prevent or prepare for the evil which is to come. When God was about to destroy *Sodom*, he saith, *Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do?* Gen. 18. 17. God revealed the rising and fall of the Kingdoms of this world, the rising and fall of the Kingdom of Antichrist, the making of the Kingdoms of this world, the Kingdoms of the Lord and of his Christ, all these the Lord revealed by the spirit unto the Apostle *John*, by him collected into that book called *The Revelation*. In the eighth of *Daniel* (vers. 13.) Christ is stiled *Palmoni*, which we translate, *a certain Saint*, but in the Margents of our Bibles we put, *The Numberer of secrets*, or, *a wonderful Numberer*. Christ is the *Numberer of secrets*, he tells them over, and hath them all (as we say) at his fingers ends, he can give an account of them at an instant, both how many they are, and what they mean. When *Nebuchadnezzar* desired to hear the interpretation of his dream, *Daniel* ascribes all to God, *He revealeth the deep and secret things, he knoweth what is the darkness, and the light dwelleth with him,* Dan. 2. 22.

Besides these deep and dark things which concern future events, the Lord revealeth also the deep things of Doctrine, the supernatural mysteries of Religion: The Incarnation of his Son, the Resurrection of the body, the mystery of justifying Faith, and of the new birth, which are absurdities to nature; these are all revealed in the word of God to our ears, and by the Spirit of God to our hearts.

Secondly, As the Lord revealeth the deep things which himself doth or speaketh, so also the deep things of mans doing or speaking,

*Qui occulta in
numerato ha-
bet. Juno.*

Speaking whether they be good or evil. Though the sinner go as deep as Hell, yet himself and his sin, are under the eye of God. Thou (saith the Psalmist) hast set our iniquities before thee, and our secret sins in the light of thy countenance. When God intends to punish iniquity, he is said to set it before him, but whether he do or no, it is before him. And as our secret iniquity is always before him, so he sometimes sets it before men. (Eccles. 10. 20.) *Curse not the King, no not in thy thought, and sit not the rich in thy Bed chamber, for a Bird of the air shall carry the voice, and that which hath wings shall tell the matter.* Solomon warns those who wickedly conspire against Kings, and persons in authority, to consider, as their sin, so their danger; for though they carry the matter never so closely, God can make it known:

'Tis hard for a man to conceal his own thoughts (when the minde is full it may quickly run over at the mouth) but 'tis easie with God to find out a way for the revealing of our thoughts. *A Bird of the air shall carry the voice:* But what's the voice of a thought? or, How comes a Bird into the bed-chamber? The bed-chamber is the surest place; and a thought is the most secret act: what can be more secret than a thought? Who can hear the sound of our thoughts, or understand their Language? We say, *Thought is free.* Thoughts fall not under the Cognisance, or censure of any Court. That which fears no evidence, fears no sentence: Yet, God to whom our thoughts are evident, can send in evidence against our thoughts. *A Bird of the air shall carry the voice of that which hath no voice.* It is a proverbial speech, to note, that by the most unlikely means, if other means fail, God will reveal those curses, and reveal them speedily. As if he had said, *Rather than such secret wickedness shall be undiscovered, God will make Birds speak, and Chamber doors speak, the stone out of the Wall, and the beam out of the Timber shall speak, rather than silence shall cover such a wickedness.* More distinctly, when he saith, *A bird of the air shall carry the voice,* he implies two things. First, that it shall be revealed by some unexpected means, or by means as little suspected for the doing of such a thing as a bird is. As, when Balaam went on finfully, *The dumb Ass speaking with mans voice, forbade the madness of the Prophet;* Balaam little dreams of such a reproof: and these shall as little dream of such a Tale-bearer. Secondly, This phrase of speech implies that the matter shall be revealed

Qua in cogitatione revolvuntur, de facili verbo proferuntur etiam praeter intentionem proferentis; Lxx. in Eccles.

*Principes &
potentiores sunt
auritissimi, viz
quicquam fit
aut dicitur
quod ipsorum
cognitionem su-
giat. Jun.*

by some speedy means. *A bird shall do it*: the Messenger shall not go but run, he shall not run but fly, *A Pegasus shall be the Poast*, he shall have wings added to his feet, he shall have wings instead of feet. The Angels are described with wings in Scripture to shew their speed, a winged Messenger shall be dispatcht on this Errand. Once more, as some refer this discovery purely to the providence of God, so others to the policy of Princes, who have their spies flying like birds in all places; men no more feared to carry the report of what is spoken, than a bird is. They have their Intelligencers in every Bed-chamber, men no more feared to carry the report of what is spoken, than the Chamber doors are. In the same sense, that Kings are said to have *long hands*, we may say also, that they have *long ears*: They have *long hands*, because they can use means to strike those that are far from them: and they have *long ears*, because they can use means to hear those who are far from them. But whether we take this or the former Interpretation, the point is equally confirmed, for even those discoveries which are made by men, are ordered and brought on by the wise and holy providence of God, who doth so hate evil; and all the works of moral darkness, especially the cursing of Kings and lawful Magistrates, that he will discover them out of all the deeps, either of natural or artificial darkness.

Further, God bringeth good things as well as evil, just and holy actions, as well as sinful and unjust, out of the deeps of darkness; *Many works of light lye in darkness*: many excellent things are under concealment. *Dauids integrity lay in the dark*, yet God brought it forth as the light, and his innocency as the Noon day. God is not Unrighteous, to forget or conceal, either our labour of love, or labours in Holiness, though men doe.

Lastly, How great an experiment hath God given us of this truth, in that great discovery which he hath made to the world (in this latter age) of *another world*. A great part of the world, even so great as bears the name of a *new world*, was a deep thing of darkness, to this part of the world, for many and many ages and generations. No man so much as dream'd of such Nations as are now discovered. The surface of those huge Countries was as little known to us as the center of the earth is: yet it was judg'd a kind of Heresie in ancient times, to say there were

were *Antipodes*. But now 'tis known that the feet of our Brethren have walked opposite to the soles of our feet; and we have not only experience but light of reason enough to evince it. God hath made Art a key to nature, and hath discovered many deep things out of that darkness to us, which our fore-fathers never saw. Thus we see, that *deep things*, both Divine and Humane, and these both practical and natural, are fetcht out of darkness by the mighty power and unsearchable wisdom of God.

There are three ways by which God makes discoveries of evil polks or praetises, lying in deepest darkness.

First, By the *confession* of the person whose head hath contrived, or his hand acted them. Evil in the heart drops out at the mouth, and this two ways.

1. By Queries and Questions put to the guilty. Such are often entrapt in their own answers, and their own tongues are a witness against themselves. As speech bewrayeth whence men are, so what they have been doing (*Prov. 20. 5.*) *Counsel in the heart of man is like deep water, but a man of understanding will draw it out.* He draws it out by questions and examinations. When those black waters will not flow out of themselves, they are pumped up by the art and industry of others.

2. A confession of these deep things out of darkness is made by the workings of a mans own conscience. When conscience is touched and beginneth to ake, that will tell tails; It is hard for a man at such a time to keep his own counsel. It was the caution of an ancient, *Be afraid of doing any thing which is ill, though there be no witness but thy self*: If thou couldst do it thy conscience taking no notice of it, thou mightest possibly keep it secret, but whatsoever thou doest, is done in the eye of conscience, therefore take heed. We have a saying, *that Murther will out*, and if nothing else bring it out, conscience will: Conscience will examine a man as strictly as any *Inquisitor in Rome*. And as men examined and tortured by severe Inquisitors, confess what they would not, so also do they who are examined and put upon the Rack by their own consciences.

Secondly, *God revealeth deep things immediately by his own spirit*: As the spirit revealeth the holy counsels of God to us, so the most secret evil designs and counsels of men (*2 King. 6. 11.*) When the King of Syria could take no counsel but it was presently dis-

covered, he might well be cast into a suspicion, that some about him were false to him, and held correspondence with the enemy, *Therefore (saith the story) the heart of the King of Syria was sore troubled for this thing, and he called his servants and said unto them, Will ye not shew me which of us is for the King of Israel? And one of his servants said, none my Lord O King but Elisha the Prophet that is in Israel, telleth the King of Israel the words that thou speakest in thy bed chamber.* The Spirit of God revealed the deep counsels of the Syrian King unto the Prophet, and the Prophet revealed them to men.

There is a third way which is more common, by which the Lord discovers deep things out of darkness, and that is, by *wonderful providences*; he makes some acts of his own providence as *Keys* to unlock the secrets of men, as hands to pluck off the Vails, as winds to dispel the clouds, and scatter the mists which hid their actions or intentions. In the History of *Joseph*, we have an admirable demonstration of this: It was a secret, a deep thing of darkness that his brethren conspired against him, they sold him into *Egypt*, and brought his torn-coat home all bloody to his father, which caused the plain-hearted old man to conclude, *That some evil beast hath devoured him.* Thus the matter was locked up; yet God makes several acts of his providence as *Keys* to open it. First, Famine pincheth *Jacob* and his family, then *Joseph's* brethren must into *Egypt*, and after one journey they must make a second, and then *Benjamin* must be detained, and *Simeon* bound; here was a strange series and succession of providences till the whole matter was discovered. The *Gunpowder plot* was a deep thing of darkness, a strange Monster (*Cui lumen ademptum*) which saw no light, not only because it never took effect; but because it was kept so close a long time under Oaths, and strongest concealments, that there was not the least suspicion of it, yet by a strange providence God discovers this deep thing out of darkness: a letter written with uncouth expressions, and by mistake put into a wrong hand, was the occasion of bring all to light. Later times have given us great experiences of this; The best intelligences we have had of secret counsels have been from their Cabinets who contrived them.

Take four Corollaries from this.

First, be afraid to do or to plot any evil secretly: The Lord discovers.

discover deep things out of darkness. *U*nally, *they who do things that are not fit to be seen conceive they are not, or shall not been seen either in doing them, or when they are done* Flatter not your selves in this vain hope, you may cast a vail upon them a while, but out they will at last.

Secondly, Be not afraid of the secret plottings of evil men, or of the deep things of their darkness, how deep soever the ways and counsels of men are laid, yet they are all above board to God. Suppose enemies are taking counsel against us, yet we have a powerful friend behind the Hangings, who hears every word they say, and sets down in a book every resolve they make, and will in fittest season, both discover and disappoint them. Let this be encouragement to all the faithful, their Father in Heaven knows and over-rules the darkest designs of wicked men on earth.

Thirdly, *When men are plotting, let us be praying.* David knew Achitophel could give desperate and deep counsel against him, therefore he prayeth, *Lord turn the counsel of Achitophel into foolishness* : As if he had said, *Lord thou knowest what he hath advised. I do not, he is plotting against me, Lord take notice that I am praying unto thee; plots were never any match for prayer, nor the counsels of the wicked able to stand before the supplications of the righteous.*

Fourthly, *No mans uprightness shall be always hid* : God will clear the innocent, for he discovereth deep things out of darkness, he that manifests the guilt of all, will also manifest the innocency of his. There is seldom any eminent or singular good thing done in the world, but it falls under misconstruction, and often such glosses are given as corrupt the texture of sincerest works; for the conclusions of malice are ever like those of Logick following (*Deteriorem partem*) the weaker and worse part. How often is Holiness miscall'd Hypocrisie, and zeal vainglory? How often is contending for the faith, misjudged faction, and contending against error, humour? In the midst of all these dark thoughts of men concerning our works, this may bear up our hearts, that as God knows them what they are, so he will make them appear as they are. The Lord Christ comforts his Disciples against all the calumnies and mis-apprehensions of the world, though they should be called Beelzebubs, and made as black as Hell by traducing pens or tongues; yet saith he (*Matth.*

10. 25.) *Fear them not, for there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; and hid, that shall not be known:* which words may have a double aim.

1. To deterre the Disciples from concealing the word of God for fear of men. As if Christ had said; *Be ye bold and constant in delivering the message which I shall put into your mouths, declare to the world the whole counsel of God, keep not back, conceal not his truth, betray not his cause by a cowardly silence: for whatsoever plausible excuses you may make to palliate and hide this lowliness and fullness of your spirits, yet at length all will out; and though you would not declare the truth of God to his glory, yet God will declare the whole truth concerning you to your shame; as the madness of your Persecutors shall be manifest, so also shall your fearfulness. therefore fear them not, What I tell you in darkness, that speak ye in the light, &c. for what ye do, or forbear to do in darkness shall come to light, with the reasons of it.*

2. These words aim at the support of the Disciples under the slanders and spiteful opinions of men, when they fully and courageously declare and preach the word of God. As if he had said, *Your Innocency may be hid, and your Righteousness unknown, you may be called Beelzebub and Devil for speaking the truths of God, yet I will take a time to put off these ugly disguises, and render you even to the eye of the world such as you are, up ight and honest men; my zealous and faithful messengers: for I assure you, there is nothing covered that shall not be revealed: and therefore your faithfulness to my cause and Gospel shall not; do ye reveal my hidden truths, and leave it to me to reveal your integrity, how much severer it may be hidden. Upon the same ground that wicked men are to fear, godly men are not to fear: wicked men have cause to fear, because their evil deeds shall be made manifest; and godly men are not to fear, yea they are to rejoyce, because their goodness and good deeds shall be made manifest: all their uprightness and faithful intentions for the promoting of the honour of Christ, and advancing of his Gospel, shall be set in the open light.*

Yet further, Though we should do much good, which is in the dark too, or hidden from our selves (for there are, as sins, so, in a sense, good works of ignorance,) or if we should have forgotten the good which we have done knowingly, yet the Lord will redeem our works out of this darkness also, the darkness I mean, whether of our own ignorance or forgetfulness, neither secrecy
nor

nor inscience nor oblivion, our own or others, can long cover a good work; let it be only our care to do good, it is the care of Christ that no good which we have done shall be lost or left in perpetual darkness. God makes many discoveries of deep things out of darkness here, and he will make an universal discovery at last: As that Apostolical Caution against rash judgment clearly imports (1 Cor. 4. 5.) *Judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come who will bring to light the hidden things of darkness* (whether good or bad) *and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts* (whether just or unjust) *and then shall every man* (who is praise worthy) *have praise of God.* The Apostle in this aims rather at the encouragement of the Saints, whose best actions are often hid, than at the terrour of the wicked, who desire and hope that their evil actions shall be always hid. Thus we see how God discovers dark and deep things. In the next verse we shall see him altering and disposing, turning and changing great things, even the Nations of the earth.

Vers. 23. *He increaseth the Nations and destroyeth them, he enlargeth the Nations and straitneth them.*

Here are two acts of providence, like *Cheker-work*, a white and a black: an act of mercy, and an act of judgment, and an act of the right hand, *increasing and enlarging*, and an act of the left, *destroying and straitning Nations.* God doth not only abase particular persons how great soever they are (*Loosing the bond of Kings, and pouring contempt upon Princes, &c.*) but he hath a controversie with whole Nations and Kingdoms, they shall be abased and smart under his hand, if they go on provoking and sinning against him.

He increaseth the Nations.

The word which we translate to *increase*, hath a double derivation. Some take it from a Root which signifies to augment or multiply. Others take it from a Root which signifies to erre or wander, and in construction, to *deceive*. Hence some render, *He deceiveth the Nations, and destroyeth them*: so the Septuagint; and it is a truth, God deceiveth the Nations, he leaveth them to their own mistakes, or to the evil counsels of others, and then *destroyeth them.* Destruction is usually let in by misapprehension.

The

Non solum De-
ac sua potentia
ac sapientia
documenta præ-
ber, in his qua
minus vel alte-
rius regis sunt,
sed in universa
aliqua multitu-
dine & nume-
rosissimo populo.
Merc.

ΝΩ Crescere,
multiplicare.
Ω Errare.
Παγνν ἔδρν
αυτῶ.
Decipiens gen-
tes & perdens
eos. Sept.

The judgment of God upon the outward estate begins at a judgment upon the understanding. Seldom hath any Nation perished, but they see they have been befooled, and that they refused their own good before they were deprived of it. As the text may bear this translation, so the truth flowing from it, is very useful.

But because the ordinary acception of the word runs fairest, *He increaseth the Nations*, &c. I shall insist only upon that.

When God made the World, he said to man, yea to every thing that had life in it, and so power of increasing, *Increase and multiply: A word from God makes the creature multiply*. The increase of every thing is from God, as well as the constitution of it. There is a threefold increase. First, In number: God said to *Abraham*, *I will multiply thy seed as the sand of the Sea, and as the Stars of Heaven*, and it was so. Secondly, He increaseth Nations in riches and plenty; he blest their basket and their store; they lend to others and do not borrow. Thirdly, He increaseth Nations in honour and reputation, they are the head, and not the tail, the sheaves of their Neighbours round about, fall down to their sheave. Such honour is promised the Jews, *That ten men shall take hold out of all Languages of the Nations, even shall take hold of the skirt of him that is a Jew, saying, we will go with you, for we have heard that God is with you*, (*Zach. 8. 23.*) Thus the Nations are increased by a word of blessing from the mouth of God.

And as he *increaseth*, so he *destroyeth*. The decays of Nations are from God, as well as their improvements are. God declarereth his power by pulling down, as well as by raising up, by killing, as well as by making alive, by destroying, as well as by increasing.

This destruction is wrought two ways, openly, or secretly. Sometimes God is a *Moth and ratteness* to a Nation, he destroys them silently, and unseen (*Hos. 5. 12.*) they decline and moulder away, they know not how. Sometimes he is a *Lion* and as a young *Lion unto a Nation*, he will *tear and go away*, and none shall rescue (*Hos. 5. 14.*) he destroyeth them visibly, by Diseases and Plagues, by Famine and the Sword. By some one, or by all these, he destroyeth them, till, as he threatned the Jews (*Isa. 6. 11.*) *The Cities be wasted without Inhabitants, and the houses without man, and the Land be utterly desolate.*

The

The last branch of the verse is of the same importance with the former.

He enlargeth the Nations, and straiteneth them again.

There is a different reading, for some render the former as an act of judgement, *He scattereth or subverteth the Nations*, and the later as an act of mercy, *He restoreth them again*. Thus he banished the Jews into *Babylon*, and after seventy years, brought them back to their own land. We understand the former clause as an act of mercy, the later of wrath and judgement.

The Original word signifies to expand or stretch a thing forth. When God increaseth a Nation, he enlargeth their borders, and having multiplied their number, gives them more room. As the enlargement of the Church is described by the Prophet (*Isa. 49. 20.*) such is the enlargement of Nations. *The Children which thou shalt have after thou hast lost the other, shall say again in thine ear, The place is too strait for me, give place to me that I may dwell.* As Bees swarm when the hive is overcharged, or as rivers overflowing break their bounds, so do the Nations of the earth, who are compared to great rivers. God sometimes opens these flood-gates, and lets them out like a mighty torrent. The irruptions of the *Goths* and *Vandals*, of the *Hunnes* and *Heruli*, are famous among Historians. And as barbarous Nations spread out themselves because of numbers, so do other Nations by their power. The *Babylonian*, the *Persian*, the *Græcian*, the *Roman* Empires, extended the wings of their sovereignty all the world over.

Mr. Broughton translates, *He spreadeth the Nations and governeth them*; so both parts of that verse speak mercy to Nations; others of the learned joyn in that translation. The Hebrew word beareth that sense most properly, signifying to lead; yea, to lead gently, peaceably and quietly, as a shepherd leadeth his Flock, or as a Father his Child. Many offerings of the Jews in their ceremonious worship, were denominated from this word, *Minchah*, because they were brought in such an honourable way, and presented before the Lord. The providence of God leads all people, his own people are led by a special providence, as the *Israelites* were in the day by a cloud, and in the night by a pillar of fire. *The Lord alone did lead them, and there*

Subversas in integrum restituit. Vulg. 70

NU Significat expandere vel extendere sicut cum aliquid expanditur ut exsiccat.

Longè laudis super faciem terra propagat & dilatat eam. Druf.

NU Duxit deduxit placide & sensim sicut pastor gregem aut pater filium suum. V. 116 *Quodlibet donum seu donativum bonorum causa alicui datum, eo quod sensim & cum pompa quadam portetur.* Biver.

*Expandit eos
super faciem
terra, & ducit
eos in locum
perditionis
Merc. ex R.
Kinch.*

was no strange God with him (Deut. 32. 12.) The Lord in mercy led forth the people, which he had redeemed, he guided them in his strength to his holy habitation (Exod. 15. 13) This interpretation runs fair. And while we, in stead of he leadeth, render, he straitneth them; we mean, he leadeth them into straits. As he spreadeth them out by prosperity, so he straitneth them by affliction. In this variety of reading, the scope and general sense of the text is the same, setting forth the irresistible power of God, in disposing Nations for the better, or for the worse, as he seeth cause, or as they give it him.

First Observe,

There is a vicissitude and change in Nations as well as in persons.

In this verse the scoals go up and down, he increaseth the Nations, and destroyeth them, he enlargeth them, and straitneth them again. Particular men, are sometimes up, and sometimes down, sometimes well, and sometimes sick, sometimes enlarged, and sometimes straitned. Now as it is with the parts, so with the whole; and though the world be a dissimular body, yet in one notion it is a simular body, being all alike in subjection to vanity and change. What Nation is there but hath suffered many changes? This Nation hath been a great example of it, and so it is at this day: And unless we humble our selves before God, and kiss the Son least he be further angry, we have cause to fear greater changes then ever we have had. Who knows what changes a year, yea a day may bring forth. These two things are out of all question; 1. That we have deserved the worst of changes. 2. That the face of affairs looks as if we should every day change for the worse, till we come to the worst.

Secondly Observe,

All the changes in Nations are from God.

He increaseth and straitneth them, his providence (not fate) watcheth over them, to order all their motions. As the motions of single persons, so the motions of whole Kingdoms are ordered by a higher hand. Divine providence acts upon every stage of worldly affairs in the world. There is a wheel in a wheel, Gods wheel moves in all the wheels of the creature: States cannot do what they please, and go on after their own pleasure; God governs the Governours, as much as those who are governed. He leadeth them into waies of peace and prosperity, he also leadeth them

them into warres and troubles. We have both exprest (Jer. 31. 28) *Like as I have watched over them, to pluck up and to break down, and to destroy, so will I watch over them, to build and to plant, saith the Lord.* No people in the world did ever find God more increasing or straitning them, then the Jews did. They were as set upon a Beacon, for all the world to look and gaze at: They were Gods *peculiar treasure*, yet he cast them out as dung or dross. He increased them in number, in riches and in honour. When the severest courses were taken to diminish them (as in Egypt by slaying the males) he then increased them: yet the hand of God was as eminent in destroying, as increasing them. More then six hundred thousand came out of Egypt, all whose carcases (excepting two) fell in the wilderness. God increased them again in Canaan, they were almost innumerable, when David numbred them; yet he destroyed and wasted them by the Babylonians. After their return from Babylon, they grew mighty again, at last God sent the Romans, who took their City and Temple from them: And how they have been scattered and emptied ever since, the Records of ancient times, and the experiences of this declare. What God did and hath done with the Nation of the Jews, he hath also done in many other Nations, and can do in all. He can lift them up or cast them down, give them a being or no being, a well being or a miserable being, at his pleasure. The absolute sovereignty and greatness of God, will bear him out in these great works, upon the greatest Nations. What's the greatness of any one, or of all Nations put together to the greatness of God? Behold (saith the Prophet, Isa. 40. 15.) *the Nations are as the drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the ballance.* A bucket full of water is no great matter to the Ocean, what then is a drop? All the weight that can be put into a pair of ballances is not much, what then is the light dust, which hangs about it? we know that bears no weight at all. It is no more for the great God to move the greatest Nation upwards or downwards, into an increase or a diminution, then to blow away the smallest dust. And as if a drop or a dust were too much, the 17th. verse assures us, that *All Nations before him are as nothing, and they are counted to him as less then nothing and vanity.* Nor can God ever want means to increase or destroy whole Nations, who made the whole world without means: *Cannot he speak a Nation into any thing,*

Fata quadam regnorum et gentium quidam esse volunt sed omnia talia nos docet Scriptura Dei naturi et consilio immutabili tribuere. Merc.

who ſpake the world out of nothing? When a people increaſe in ſin as much as in ſovereignty, and are ſtrained in obedience and thankfulneſs to God who hath enlarged them; then he reduces them to their former nothing.

Job hath not yet done with this argument, but as he had told us of the judgements of God upon greateſt perſons before he ſpake of Nations, ſo now having ſpoken of the judgements of God upon Nations, he deſcends in his concluſion to thoſe again which God ſends upon eminent perſons in the two laſt verſes of this Chapter.

JOB Chap. 12. Verſ. 24, 25.

He taketh away the heart of the chief of the people of the earth, and cauſeth them to wander in a wilderneſs where there is no way.

They grope in the dark without light, and he maketh them to ſtagger like a drunken man.

THeſe two verſes are the continuation and concluſion of *Job's* argument, liſting up the power and wiſdom of God in his diſpenſations towards men.

In the former part of the Chapter we have diſcuſſed what God doth to perſons and what to nations. Here *Job* turneth his ſpeech upon a point which he had touched before, *He maketh the Judges fools*, or turneth their counſels into folly; Now, *He taketh away the heart of the chief of the people of the earth.*

סִיר לֵב

סִיר *Est recedere declinare, in Hiphil re-movere recedere faciens.*

He taketh away.

Some read, *He changeth*, Others, *He removeth*, or *cauſeth to decline*. The Hebrew will bear either of thoſe readings, *He taketh away*.

The heart of the chief of the people of the earth.

The heart is the *chief piece* in any of the people of the earth. And here he taketh away the heart of the *chief of the people of the earth.*

earth. 'Tis sad when the chief part is taken away from the chiefest of the people.

The heart under a natural consideration is that noble instrument of life seated in the midst of the body : by a metaphor it signifies any thing which is seated in the middle , or toward the center , because the heart is so placed in the body. And by a *Synechdoche*, the heart is put frequently in Scripture for the motions of the heart, or for whatsoever acteth there. The understanding, will, affections, purposes, resolutions, or courage of man, any or all of these are expressed by the heart , because any or all these are wrought in, or issue from the heart.

To take away the heart , hath reference chiefly to these three things.

First, He taketh away the understanding, and leaveth men to the guidance of ignorance : and then they are hurried by gusts of passion, not ordered by the dictates of reason. God benights their minds , their foolish hearts are darkned , and so they become vain both in their imaginations and resolves. The *chief of the earth* are then neither able to give good counsel nor receive it, they who formerly were as Oracles , betray a feebleness of judgement, and the gravest States-men prove Infants in understanding. All wholsome remedies , and proper expedients for their own good, or the publike safety, are taken from them when God taketh away their hearts. This was further shewed at the 17th verse, whether I refer the reader.

Secondly, The heart is put for the will. Some interpret this text, rather of the will then of the understanding : God is said to *take away the will* , when he takes it off from what it was set upon before, and causeth it to move and encline to another object (*Prov. 21. 1.*) *The Kings heart is in the hand of the Lord, as the rivers of water, he turneth it whether soever he will* : By the *heart* we are to understand the will of Kings ; turning properly concerns the will : The will putteth it self out to prosecute what the understanding dictates : *The will usually walketh in, or after the light of the understanding* : God works so effectually in the *heart of the chief of the people of the earth* , that though their understandings give them light to walk in such a way (whether it be a false or a true light or way, is not the point here) yet he can take their wills off from it , and turneth them whether soever he will. As the persons of Kings are in the hand of God to protect

Cor per metaphoram significat medium & interius cuius rei, per synecdochon omnia quorum sedes est in eo de. mens, voluntas, &c.
Pined.

Cordis nomen ad voluntatem potius quam ad intellectum hoc loco pertinet.
Aquin.

them, ſo their wills are in his hand to guide and over-power them. *They who are maſters of men, are not maſters of their own will. A King who rules others, is not under his own rule* The ſimilitude is very elegant; God turneth his heart *even as the rivers, or ſprings of water*: Rivers of water are led by their channels, you may draw them this way or that way by cutting out water courſes. When the will of any one of the *chiefs of the earth* runs ſtrongly in ſuch a conſtant ſtream, God can ſtop it, cut out ſluces (as it were) and give it a new channel, he can empty the ſtream of a Kings will, into a channel of his own making, and cauſe this river to run upon what ground he pleaſeth. Some of the Ancients obſerving what ſtrange courſes the hearts of moſt Kings have run, turn the interpretation of this text into another channel, telling us it muſt be expounded of the Saints who are *Spiritual Kings*.

Do you think, ſay they, that the heart of Pharaoh, Antiochus, Herod, or of Julian, was in the hand of God? Doth God turn the heart into the waies of blood and perſecution againſt his people? Surely ſuch mens hearts are in the hand of the Devil, not of God, ſo they argue. But by their leave, we are not afraid to ſay, that even the hearts of wicked Kings are in the hand of God, yet he hath no hand in their wickedneſs, unleſs to bound it. The wills of the moſt wilfull Princes are flexible and moveable at the will of God, even while they move, yea ſpurn againſt it: he makes them ſubject to his ſecret will; while they are rebelling againſt his revealed will. They will not do the later, but the former is done upon them whether they will or no. *Some men are ſo wilful that they turn their whole ſoul into will*; therefore is nothing of reaſon or underſtanding, nothing of love or affection appears in them, but all of will: Their ſouls are loſt in their wills: yet theſe wills God findes out and diſpoſeth of. The will of Princes (ſaith a Heathen) is ſuſt and ſtrong, unready and unwonted to the direction of others. They who are full of power think all muſt obey their wills; therefore to make their wills either ſubject or obedient, argues tranſcendent power. The wills of moſt men are ready to follow the wills of Princes, as the ſhadow doth the body: therefore to make their wills follow, is the work of God (*Eccleſ. 8. 4.*) *Where the word of a King is, there is power, and who may ſay unto him, what doſt thou?* Princes will not be ſtopped but by a ſuperiour power, their priviledge is great, and many times the

vio-

*Putas quòd cor
ſalians imp iſſi-
mi in ma u Dei
fuit? abſit ſ d
de illu dicit,
qui regnant ſu-
per peccata.
Hieron in
Pſal. 137.*

*Nec me fugit
quàm dū m &
verè inſol. nſ
ad recta ſecti
regius nolit in-
mor. Senec.
Act. 1.*

violence of their spirits greater. As *Pilate* when some advised him to alter the inscription upon the cross of Christ, answers, *Principum virum id a vox est, Quid scripsi, scripsi.* What I have written I have written, it shall stand: so the chief of the earth say, what we have done, we have done, what we have resolved, we have resolved. Yet God who is chief above all the chiefs of the earth, taketh away, or removeth the hearts of the chief of the earth, they shall not alwaies will what they would. A good man doth the evil which he would not, and evil men do the good which they would not. God causeth them to will that the thing shall be done, though they have no will, either to the thing or to the doing of it.

Thirdly, The heart is put for courage and fortitude. God takes away the heart under this notion; he can make the most valiant men cowards, and pul down the highest spirits. As he gives women the courage of men, so he can make men les then women in courage (*Amos 2. 14, 15.*) The Prophet sheweth God taking away, not only fighting courage, but flying courage (so some understand that text) *The flight shall perish from the swift,* they shall not have a heart to shift for themselves: they once made sure of it that they had legs to run, though no hands to fight, but their flight shall perish, they shall not have so much spirit left as to run away. The fighting courage of Israel was quite sunk (*Josh. 7. 5.*) *The hearts of the people melted and became as water,* that is, their courage failed. And it is threatned as a judgement (*Lev. 26. 36.*) *I will send a faintness into their hearts,* And what shall the effect of this be? *The sound of a shaken leaf shall chase them, and they shall flee as fleeing from a sword:* they shall not only flee at the beating of a drum, at the sound of a trumpeter, or at an Alarm to the battel, but at the sound of a shaking leaf, *Deut. 28. 65.* *The Lord shall give thee a trembling heart.*

Any of these waies, the heart is in the hand of God, he can make an understanding heart foolish, a resolved wilfull heart flexible, and a stout courageous heart faint and fearful. He that had a heart like a Lyon, shall quake and be (as we say) *White-livered* at the real appearance, yea at the shadow of danger: Thus the Lord sheweth his mighty power among the chief of the earth, in taking away their hearts.

God in Scripture calleth upon man to give him his heart:

My

My son give me thine heart. This act of God in the text is a chastening of the former neglect.

Hence Observe,

God taketh away their hearts, who will not give up their hearts unto him.

If we graciouſly give our hearts unto God, he will not judi-
cially take our hearts from us. We never have our understand-
ings, our wills, our courage, ſo much in our own cuſtody, as
when we reſigne them to Gods keeping. God would ſo order
them in us and for us, that we ſhould have the command of them,
were they once at his command. But if when he calleth, *Give
me thine heart*, we or any of the chief of the earth ſay, no, we
will not give our hearts to thee, not our underſtandings to judge
for thee, not our wills to ſubmit to thee, not our courage to act
for thee: Then ſaith God, I will take away your hearts from
you; you that uſe your underſtanding, your wills, your cou-
rage againſt me, ſhall not have them to uſe (*Hos 7 11*.) *Ephraim
is called a ſilly dove without heart*: then the chief of the earth are
like *ſilly doves* (though indeed ravenous Harpies) when God
taketh away their hearts. The Saints are *innocent doves, without
gall, and the wicked are ſilly doves, without a heart*. God threat-
neth his people to ſend them ſuch Chiefs, Chiefs without an
heart (*Iſa 3 4 12*.) *I will give them Child en to be their Princes,
and women juſt rule over them*. He doth not mean Children in
age, or women in ſex; for ſome women are of masculine ſpirits
and have done valiantly. *Twas *Deborah* a woman who ſaid,
O my ſoul thou haſt trodden down ſtrength; no man ever ſpoke
more like a man: Some Children in years have acted like the
aged, *Juſab* did ſo. So then the Prophets meaning is, I will
give them rulers that ſhall be as little in underſtanding, as Chil-
dren are in ſtature, their reaſon ſhall ſcarce be a cubit high; I
will give them Chiefs, that ſhall be as timorous as women natu-
rally are: Their courage ſhall ſcarce ſerve them to ſee their own
blood without ſwooning, much leſs to venture their blood in a-
ny honourable ſervice. Thus God takes away the hearts of the
chief of the people, when either they or the people reſuſe to give
God theirs.

קַדְשֵׁי רָאשֵׁי

Again, the Hebrew is, *He taketh away the heart of the [Heads]
of the people of the earth.* The Leaders and Governours of a peo-
ple, are their Heads: That's the language of the old Teſtament
every

every where. It is ill when the heart is taken from the *heels* or *lowest* of the people, but how miserable is it, when the heart is taken from the *heads* or *highest* of the people. A people whose heads have no heart, are upon the matter headless. *A heartless head is no better than no head.*

Lastly Observe,

All mankind is not of one rank.

We have here the people, and the Heads of the people. As the natural body is distinguished into superiour and inferiour, into noble and ignoble parts, so is the political body: As that body is a Monster, which is all head, or whose head is too big for the body, so is that which hath no head, or a head too little for the body. Where all govern, there is no Government, and where all are chief there can be no order. And as God hath appointed some to the dignity of Headship, for the preservation of order, so it is their duty who are Heads to preserve order. The head takes care naturally for the whole body, the head sees for the foot, and respects the little finger. Magistrates are Rulers over the persons of the people, but they are servants to the good of the people. A people ought to serve their Rulers, yet Rulers are the greatest servants. As it is the duty of all to serve them, so it is their office to serve all. *He taketh away the heart of the chief, or, of the heads of the people.* And what then?

None of the works of God are without effect, when he acteth somewhat will come of it, here is a threefold effect following this judiciary act of God in taking away the heart of the *Chief of the earth.*

1. *They wander in a Wilderness where there is no way.*
2. *They grope in the dark without light.*
3. *They stagger like a drunken man.*

The first of these effects is laid down in the latter clause of the 24th verse.

He causeth them to wander.

The word which we translate, to wander, signifies both corporal and mental wandering; the error of the foot and the error of the mind. 'Tis put for corporal wandering (*Gen. cordis aequè ac* 20. 13.) *When God caused me (saith Abraham) to wander from de errore pedis.* my fathers house; and again, *Gen. 37. 15.* 'Tis put for mental wandering, *Psal. 119. ult. I have gone astray like a lost sheep. seek thy*

thy ſervant; Iſa. 63. 17. O Lord, why haſt thou made us to erre from thy ways?

But that which is moſt conſiderable here, is the act of God, *He cauſeth them to wander*; This intimates an efficiency: Hence 'tis queſtioned, How doth God cauſe man to wander? God doth not lead man into falſe ways; nor doth he hinder man from going in thoſe which are good and right; thus God cauſeth no man to wander: And yet he doth more than barely permit or ſuffer man to wander; he is active in it, *He cauſed them to wander*. For the clearing of it, I anſwer,

Fiſt, God judgeth and pronounceth ſuch unworthy of light, who have abuſed it, or that he ſhould clear their minds with the knowledge of his truth, who have not obeyed his truth, but held it in unrightneſs.

Non quod in falſitatem eos inducat, ſed quia lumen ſuum iis ſubtrahit ne veritatem ne veritatem cognoscant, &c. Aquin.

Secondly, Upon the paſſing of this dreadful ſentence, he withdraweth or with-holdeth his light from them. They muſt needs wander who walk in darkneſs, and unleſs God continue his light, we return to our own darkneſs. The ſetting of the Sun is enough to make the ſurface of the earth and the air dark, becauſe they have no inherent light: God needs not inſuſe darkneſs into us, to make us dark, we in our ſelves are nothing but darkneſs.

Thirdly, Having withdrawn his light, God proceeds to an act of tradition, delivering ſuch up into the hands of their own dark luſts and black affections, yea he delivers ſuch up into the hand of Satan, who is the Prince of darkneſs; and who hath darkneſs enough to caſt into the mind of man, till it be filled with darkneſs. *If our Goſpel be hid* (ſaid the Apoſtle, 2 Cor. 4. 3, 4.) *it is hid to them that are loſt, in whom the God of this world hath blinded the eyes of their mind, left the light of the glorious Goſpel of Chriſt, who is the Image of God, ſhould ſhine unto them.* Satan is Gods Executioner: the God of this world blinds their eyes who ſee not the offered light of God, and the more it is offered and neglected, the more he blinds them, and the more they wander. They wander who never ſaw the light, but they wander moſt dangerously who are blinded with the light, or becauſe they have abuſed it.

Fourthly, The Lord is ſaid to cauſe men to wander, becauſe he ordereth the objects and occasions, the means and manner, the ſteps and degrees of their Aberrations. They who wander moſt

moſt out of the way of Obedience, cannot wander out of the eye and way of providence. The providence of God is ever in its way, even in reference to them who wander out of the way. They who act moſt conſuſedly, indiſpoſedly, and erroneouſly, are kept in a due courſe and method, as to the purpoſe and deſigne of God. The Prophet *Iſaiab* (Chap. 20. 20.) ſpeaks of a *Bridle that ſhall be in the jaws of the people, cauſing them to erre or wander.* A bridle is rather to keep in the way than to carry out of the way. The place is of a difficult Interpretation: moſt expound it of the power of the Babylonians, which being put into the jaws of the Jewiſh Nation, cauſed them to wander out of their own country into captivity, yea and cauſed many of them to erre and wander from the way of holy Doctrin and Worſhip. However, we may allude to that Scripture for the clearing of the point in hand, though we make no proof of it. The bridle of providence is in the jaws of many men, even in the jaws of the heads of the earth, cauſing them (as *Job* ſpeaks here) to wander, and yet while they are wandering, that bridle rules and holds them within the compaſs of divine pleaſure. Thus the Lord who guides his people in his own way, cauſeth many to wander in a Wilderneſs where there is no way, and yet guideth them in their wanderings. For as the darkneſs is no darkneſs to God, ſo the wilderneſs is no wilderneſs to God: his providence is in a clear way to the fulfilling of his own counſels, how much or how long ſoever he cauſeth men to wander from theirs.

In a Wilderneſs.

We are not to take this *wilderneſs* literally, as if the meaning were that God bringeth men into deſerts and waſts, as he did *Iſrael* his people ſourty years together. *To wander in a wilderneſs* is a proverbial ſpeech, and implies theſe two things.

1. He is ſaid to wander in a wilderneſs, who is ignorant of his way, or knoweth not how to direct and make his courſe, we ſay, *The man's in a Wood*, when we perceive one intangled in ſpeech or action. Hence

2. To wander in a wilderneſs, notes improbability, yea extreameſt difficulty of attaining our end. A man that is in a wide vaſt wilderneſs, gives himſelf for loſt, every ſtep may be backward as well as forward: As he knows not where he goes, ſo he knows not

whether he goes: He is in a Wilderness, who knoweth not his way, or despaireth of his end.

𐤀𐤍𐤏𐤓 Inanitas
vacuitas, confu-
ſio, res informis,
errare eos facit
in invio vel
inani ubi nullus
ſit difficulta-
tum exitus.
Pined.
Mente diſtinti
vias & vario-
nes ineunt in-
commedas &
perniciſas.

The Original word is *Tobu*. *Moses* hath it to expreſs the Chaos, *Gen. 1. 1. The earth was without form and void*: Before God planted the world, all the world was a Wilderness, a place without form, it had no method in it: Creation methodiz'd that rude heap, and drew the Wilderness into a Garden. A Wilderness notes any ſtate or condition without ſhape or order: and thoſe men wander in a Wilderness, who wanting the true leadings of humane reaſon, and a divine rule, run dangerous and pernicious ways, both to themſelves and others: He that goes in ſuch ways, goes out of his way, yea (as the next claule of the verſe ſpeaks) he goes without all ways. *They wander in a Wilderness*

Where there is no way.

𐤀𐤏𐤕 Iter, via
qua calcatur
pedibus per me-
taphoram cur-
ſus vel inſtitu-
tum vivendi.

The way is to be underſtood as the Wilderness, *metaphorically*: The word ſignifieth, not only a way which we tread with our feet, but the way which we tread with our actions: A right courſe of life is the way of man. Theſe (through the judgement of God) *Wander in a Wilderness where there is no way*; that is, *no plain, no right, no beaten way*, unleſs beaten by the Sons of *Belial*, or by the Travellers to the land of trouble and darkneſs. When God takes away the hearts of men, they run ſtrange courſes, and go ways which wiſe men never went, the foot of honeſty or of juſtice, treads not their paths. They who go in ſuch ways, *Go in a Wilderness where there is no way.*

Obſerve from this effect,

First, *That the very miſtakes and errors of men are from God.*

1. Spiritual miſtakes, or miſtakes in ſpiritual things (*Iſa. 63. 17.*) *O Lord, why haſt thou made us to erre from thy ways* (ſo the Church cryeth out) *and hardened our heart from thy fear* &c. God made them to erre when he did not effectually ſhew them the truth; he hardened their hearts when he did not ſoften them. God left them a while to the conduct of their own luſts, becauſe they had long reſuſed the conduct of his Spirit. They *vexed his Spirit* (*verſ. 11.*) and therefore he gave them up to their own ſpirits (*Pſal 81. 12.*) All the motions of man are aberrations, when he moves without, or againſt the counſel of God.

2. Mistakes in civil things (which is the business of this Text) are from God too. God took away the heart of *Rehoboam*, and then rejecting good counsel, *He wandered in a Wilderness where there was no way. Wherefore the King hearkened not unto the people, for the cause was from the Lord, that he might perform his saying,* 1 King. 12. 15. The Lord left *Rehoboam* to the pride of his heart, and to the blindness of his mind, and then he ran into that extreme mistake, which lost him ten parts of his Kingdom.

Secondly, From the Connexion. *He taketh away the heart of the chief of the earth, and what followeth? They wander in a Wilderness where there is no way.*

Observe, *When the heart is disordered, the whole man is disordered.*

Put the heart out of frame, and all is out of frame: The heart is the prime mover in man, whether it be to do good or to do evil. Therefore the work of Conversion beginneth at the heart, or is the giving of a new heart: God doth not give a new hand, or a new eye, a new tongue or a new foot, but a new heart, because he knows that if once the heart be new, the whole man will be renewed. If the heart be settled, all is settled: *His heart is fixed* (saith the Psalmist) *and he shall not be afraid.* The heart runs before the foot stirs, either into the ways of sin, or from the approach of danger. The heart is Pilot and guide (under God) of mans life and way. Where God takes away the heart he never staies himself, and he that hath not a heart within him, nor God near him, may do any thing rather than what he ought, or go any whether, rather than where he should. *He that is deserted of God intangles himself at every step,* he is in a Wilderness, and the further he goes, the more he is out of his way. As it was with *Pharaoh*, God took away his heart, he would not hear the counsel that was given him to let the people go, and then he wilder'd himself from day to day, till he was utterly ruined, every step he took was out of the way of his own safety and honour.

Thirdly Observe,

They that will not take Gods ways; shall be carried where there is no way.

God sheweth man his way, Go here (saith God) it is a way of Holiness; go there, it is the way of justice, come hither, this

*Deus requirit
ut sinamus nos
ab illo duci
quamvis vide-
amur per invi-
um duci. Dum
enim ille dux
nostri itineris
fuerit nostros
pedes diriget
quamvis nos
via rationem
non teneamus.
Pined.*

*Via fidei est ob-
scura non aper-
ta & clara
visionis.*

is the way of truth: Thus God beckons and invites men into his way. If we say, no, but we will walk in our own ways, then God resolves, seeing you love to go out of my way, you shall go in a wilderness where there is no way; you shall meet with Bushes, Thorns and Briers to scratch and vex you; yea, you shall meet with wilde beaſts, with Scorpions and Serpents, to sting and devour you. God meeteth those that rejoyce and work righteousness, even those that remember him in his ways (*Isa. 64. 5.*) But Bushes and Briers, Serpents and Scorpions shall meet those who turn from the ways of God, even those who rejoyce and work unrighteousness. These run into danger, as fast as they run into sin. *There's no safety out of Gods way, many have died in Gods way, but no man ever perished in it.* It is said of Abraham (*Heb. 11. 8.*) *That he went out he knew not whither.* The Saints go at Gods call where there is no way, that is, no way known to them, but yet they are assured there is a way cut out and measured for them, by the wisdom of God; Abraham was sure of a good way, and of a good end, yet he went he knew not whether. Abraham knew he had God for his guide, though he knew not a step of the way he was to goe. It becometh us to follow God blindfold; blinde obedience (in that sense) is good, but due to none but God. Faith bids us to do that, for which we can give no reason but this, we are commanded to do it. So some expound that of David (*Psal. 119. 104.*) *Thy word is a Lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path;* he doth not say, the word was a light unto his eyes, but a light unto his feet; the word is a light to the eyes, that is, it shineth to the understanding; yet the word is sometimes a light unto our feet, when it is not a light unto our eyes, that is, God will have us go where we cannot see our way. Answerable to that of the Apostle (*2 Cor. 5. 7.*) *We walk by Faith and not by sight;* Faith hath a light for its feet, but not to its eyes. Full vision swallows up Faith in Heaven: And the more vision we have on earth, the less we act by Faith. Believers have not a clear sight, but they have a sure guide. Wicked men would be thought to see much, but their sight leads them out of the true way, or into the wilderness where there is no way, but that of sin, nor end, but that of sorrow. Here is the first effect of Gods taking away the heart of the chief of the earth, *they wander in a Wilderness where there is no way.* We have two other effects, *vers. 25.*

Verse

Verſ. 25. *They grope in the dark without light, and they ſtagger like a drunken man.*

They grope in the dark without light.

The word ſignifies to find out or prove our way by feeling, this *וַיִּדְרֹךְ* we call groping. In the dark, hands or ſtaves are to us in ſtead of eyes. A blind man though he be in the open Sun, yet he gropes for his way, for he wants the light of his eyes: a man who hath the light of his eyes, yet wanting the light of the air, and being in outward darkneſs, even he muſt grope his way (*Job 5. 14. Eliphaz* deſcribing the judgment of God upon the men of the world, ſaith; *They meet with darkneſs in the day time, and grope in the noon day as in the night*; that is, in things that are clear and evident they are puzzled, and know not which way to turn themſelves, when the way lies ſtrait and is without turnings. It is a great judgment of God, when in buſineſſes that are as clear as day, men ſtand beating their brains, and troubling themſelves, as if they were in the dark. It is very ill to want light, but it is worſe to have light and not to uſe it. *They grope in the dark without light.*

Palpavit tēgē, tangēds exploravit.

Deſcriptio hominis cujus mutatum eſt cor, & mens aut corrupta aut conturbata vehementer. Sanct.

There is a twofold darkneſs; Firſt, Natural, that is not here meant. Secondly, Metaphorical; and that is of two ſorts. Firſt, The darkneſs of ignorance. Secondly, The darkneſs of trouble or of affliction. We may underſtand the text, of darkneſs in either of the two latter ſenſes, *They grope in the dark*, that is, in the darkneſs of ignorance: or, in the darkneſs of trouble. Rather joyn both together, they are in trouble, and they are ignorant, not knowing which way to get out, and clear their way.

But why doth he ſay, *They grope in the dark without light.*

Light and darkneſs are contrary, what agreement is there (ſaith the Apoſtle) between light and darkneſs? Though there be no agreement between light and darkneſs, yet ſometimes there is a mixture of light and darkneſs; ſome darkneſs hath ſome light in it: That's it we call twylight, the duſk of the evening, or of the morning, there is a time when it is not perfectly dark, yet the light is gone, the Sun is down. Such a day is deſcribed in the book of *Zecbary*, *A day which ſhall be neither dark nor light, but it ſhall be between both.* In it is mercy, that when we have not a clear light, yet to have ſome glimmering, or appearance

appearance of light. The judgment here is, *They shall grope in the dark without light*, that is, they shall have pure darkness.

The Hebrew is yet somewhat more emphatical, *They feel darkness and not light*. Repetitions with a negative are frequent in Scripture, to shew a vehement negation (*Amos 5. 18.*) *The day of the Lord is darkness and not light*. *Isa. 38. 1.* A message was carried to Hezekiah; *Thou shalt die and not live*, that is, thou shalt surely die. *Job. 1.* He confessed and denied not, that is, he confessed strongly or peremptorily. So here, *They feel darkness and not light*, that is, they feel extrem darknes, or the extremity of darkness, the greatest imaginable.

H. b. ais ustratum est dum vem & pondus afferre volunt sententia affirmativa, addunt contrarij negationem. In tenebris & non in luce, i. e. in tenebris omnis lucis expertibus.

Two things I shall observe from this (taking the passage as an expression of the judgement of God upon a sinful people.)

First, *They who abuse light shall be deprived of light.*

He taketh away the heart, then they wander, and then they grope in darkness without light. They had light, yet acted like men in the dark, or like blind men: they walked in darkness when they had light. Hence God pronounceth against them, *You shall grope in darkness and have no light*: God threatned his ancient people the Jews with this dreadful plague (*Deut. 28. 28, 29.*) *I will smite thee with madness and blindness and astonishment of heart, and thou shalt grope at noon dayes, as the blind gropeth in darkness, and thou shalt not prosper in thy ways.* Light is the gift of God, he giveth, and he taketh it away. As when he created the world, there was nothing but darkness, and he said, *Let there be light and there was light*, so he saith now to persons, yea to Nations, who are in light, and have abused the light, the light of the Gospel or the light of outward prosperity, *Let there be darkness upon them*, and it is so. He can make light without darkness, and darkness without light. Take heed of sinning against light, lest ye grope in the dark without light. *Those sins leave the Soul, yea the whole man in greatest darkness, which are committed in or against the greatest light.*

Secondly Observe,

That persons forsaken of God, and covered over with darkness, are useless and unfit for any thing.

He that is in the dark cannot see. *Prov. 4. 19.* *The way of the wicked is as darkness, they know not at what they stumble*; they who

who knows not at what they stumble, know not where they go. A blind man fears in a plain way, and goes sometimes confidently where there is greatest danger : Wicked men are blind; they know not whether they go, nor what they do. He that knows not what he doth, may too late know what he hath done, and he that knows not whether he goes, may know too late whether he is gone; having stumbled often, he falls at last into that pit of darkness, from whence he shall never see nor find his way out. Remember the Counsel of Christ (*Job. 12. 35.*) *Walk while you have the light, lest darkness come upon you, for he that walketh in darkness knoweth not whether he goeth :* They who know not where they go, know not whither they go; If our way be hidden from us, so also is our end. This is the second effect which follows the taking away of the heart. *They grope in darkness without light.*

The third effect is,

He maketh them to stagger like a Drunken man.

They who are overcome with wine or strong drink are unable, not only to manage businesses, but to order themselves. Drunkenness is the disturbance of the brain, and the overthrow of our senses. Drunkenness maketh a storm in the tongue, and a tempest all the body over. Drunkenness drowneth reason, and maketh shipwreck of chastity. There is a mental, as well as a corporal drunkenness: A dry drunkenness as well as a wet drunkenness. Sober, grave, discreet and prudent men, who by their wisdom and judgement have overcome all oppositions, and carried all before them, even these shall stagger and reel too and fro, not knowing where they are, or upon what ground they stand.

*Ebrietas est
turbatio capitis,
subversio sen-
suum, tempestas
linguæ, procella
corporis, nau-
fragium casti-
tatis, insania
voluntatis.
Aug.*

The wrath of God taketh away the reason of man. The Drunkards reason is suspended: we say commonly, *they are beasts*, and we call drunkenness a beastly sin, because such act more like beasts than men. *I* (saith the good Prophet, *Jer. 23. 9.*) *am like a drunken man, because of the Lord, and because of the words of his holiness :* That is, I do even stagger and reel, I am as a man astonished and senceless at the apprehension of Gods displeasure, and because of that cup of his fierce indignation, which his holy word threatens against an unholy people. The prophet was as a drunken man, while he foresaw a cup in the hand of God, the

the wine whereof was red with wrath; how drunken then were they who were made to drink it, dreggs and all to the very bottom? Of ſuch *Iſaiah* ſpeaketh (*chap. 29. 9.*) *They are drunken, but not with wine, they ſtagger, but not with ſtrong drink: For the Lord hath poured upon you the ſpirit of deep ſleep.* Men ſin greatly againſt God, when they are drunken with wine, and God puniſheth man greatly, when he makes him drunken without wine: when he takes away the heart, and leaves ſober men to act and perſonate the drunkard.

To clear which, I ſhall ſhew you a ſeven-fold parallel between a man who hath too much drink in him, and no heart in him, God having taken away his heart.

Fiſt, They who are drunken, think every thing moves and reels; the very earth ſeems to totter under them, and the whole world to turn about them. Whereas indeed, 'tis only their heads that turn, and themſelves that reel. 'Tis ſo with many great Politicians and Chiefs of the people: God in judgement taketh away their hearts, and then (to their apprehenſion) every thing turns. They fearfully ſuppoſe ſometimes that all turns againſt them, and ſometimes flatteringly, that all turns for them. This giddineſs of their heads, muſt needs produce giddy counſels, and unſettle all they ſet themſelves unto. God took away the heart of *Cain*, and then in this ſenſe alſo, as well as in the letter, he dwelt in the land of *Nod*, that is, in a trembling moving land: yea, *Cain* thought every mans hand was turned againſt him to ſlay him, as ſoon as God was turned from him, *Gen. 4. 14.* *Pharaoh's* ſuſpicious head forecaſt great dangers to himſelf from a people, who intended him no harm. Theſe *Iſraelites* (ſaith he) will ſurely turn from me, and joyn with my enemies: this unjuſt and groundleſs fear, put him upon ſuch counſels as proved the juſt ground of his own overthrow.

Secondly, Drunkenneſs makes the object appear double or crooked to the eye. For as he that looks upon objects through the water that is without him, ſo he that looks upon them through the watery liquor that is within him, ſees that which is ſtrait, as if it were crooked, and that which is ſingle doubles in his ſight. Thus when the Lord poureth a ſpirit of penal drunkenneſs upon the wiſeſt in the world, the ſtraiteſt and juſteſt actings of righteous men are judged crooked and indirect; what they do with greateſt ſimplicity and plainneſs, is counted doubling,
yea.

yea, juggling with God and man. Christ himself was called a deceiver by such a generation. And Paul speaks of himself, and his fellow Apostles, we are, *as deceivers, yet true.* And as the actions of others, so their own dangers and enemies seem double, yea treble and twenty fold, to what indeed they are. Troubled imaginations are a distorting and multiplying glass, to every work, thing or person they look upon.

Thirdly, Drunkenness dims the bodily eye: the mental eye of these men is so dimmed that they cannot discern between right and wrong, between good and evil. They put *light for darkness, and darkness for light, bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter.* Their minds are blinded, and their understandings as much disabled from knowing what is just, as their wills and affections are from chusing and embracing it. The Prophet (*Isa. 28. 7.*) reproving drunkenness in the letter, saith, *They have erred through wine, and through strong drink are out of the way; the Priest and the Prophet have erred through strong drink, they are swallowed up of wine, they are out of the way through strong drink, they erre in vision, they stumble in judgement.* Now as men that are corporally drunk, wear out their wits, drown their brains, weaken their judgements, and when they are actually drunk, are not able to make any judgement at all; such dotards do they proceed, who are intoxicated with the wine of divine revenges. The Prophet describes them fully (*Isa. 19. 14.*) *The Lord hath mingled a perverse spirit in the midst thereof, and they have caused Egypt to erre in every work thereof, as a drunken man staggereth in his vomit.* They who erre in every work, must needs draw them into errour, who work by their direction. If the blind lead the blind, both fall into the ditch. They who have lost their own eyes, will make but ill guides for others.

Fourthly, A drunken man defiles and pollutes himself with his own vomit, he pours that out loathsomly, which he poured in delightfully. Thus also men left of God, defile whatsoever they put their hands or tongues unto. They continually vomit up the filthiness of their hearts, the pride, the cruelty, the injustice, the baseness of their spirits, in all they speak or act: Their best counsels are like *shameful spewing upon all their glory*, as the Prophet speaks (*Hab. 2. 16.*) *their stink and their ill savour goeth up when they do great things* (*Joel 2. 20.*) And the greater the things are which they do, the greater is the stink that goeth up.

Their own dung or vomit, is of a better savour then their designs and workings are. Plain-hearted *Jacob* was afraid that the fraudulent and cruel dealings of his two sons, *Simeon* and *Levi*, would make him *stink among the inhabitants of the Land* (*Gen. 34.30.*) Cruelty and treachery are odious, both in the sight of God and man; good and bad; they are so in the sight of the good, whosoever commits them, and they are so in the sight of the bad, if any commit them but themselves.

Fifthly, Drunkenness doth not only empty men of reason, but filleth them with passion, it makes them mad and furious: We say of some, they are *mad-drunk*. This effect of drunkenness is often visible in the counsels and waies of men deserted and dishearted by God: they become raging mad, they like *Jehu*, *drive furiously*, they fume and some, they make all both weary and ashamed of their company. *Why do the Heathen rage* (saith the Psalmist) *and the people imagine a vain thing?* 'Tis a fit of this drunkenness that makes them so. The inhabitants of the earth being drunk with the mystical wine of Babylonish whorish Fornication, rage against Christ and his laws: yea, then *they are full of the fury of the Lord, lying like a wilde bull in a net at the head of every street*, *Isa. 51. 10.*

Sixthly, The text tells us that drunkenness makes men stagger, they cannot keep their feet, nor stand their ground. Such a judgement God sendeth upon wicked men: their minds are full of irresolutions, they are not able to stand to their own purposes and promises: they stagger from this part to that, from this side to that: They change interests as fast as there is any change in affairs or outward accidents. Now they are for the truth; and presently they oppose the truth. They are like the *double minded man*, of whom the Apostle *James* speaks, *unstable in all their waies*.

Lastly, Drunken men often run upon their own ruine. We have a saying, *that drunkards seldome take hurt*, the meaning is, they are not sensible of the hurt they take; they indeed take hurt ofner then any men, and run desperately upon their own death. Thus men left of God run courses as unsafe, as they are unjust: and while they make too much hast to save, destroy themselves. They rush like *Balaam* upon the sword's point, and while they are most afraid of trouble, no advice, scarce any force of friends can keep them off from it. They will stagger till they

fall, and fall so, that they can never rise again. We may find many parallels of it abroad, and among our selves not a few. Do we not see men groping in the dark without light, wandering in the wilderness where there is no way, staggering like drunken men? It were easier to give particular examples of these three effects in all ages and histories of the world: But I shall conclude with three general instances held out in Scripture.

The First is that of the Apostle concerning the Gentiles (*Rom. 1. 21.*) *They knew God (they had light): but they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful, but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish hearts was darkened:* they obscured the light which God gave them in the creature, or benighted themselves in the day time of natural light: And what followed? *Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools.* They wandered in the wilderness of their own lusts and vile affections, where there was no way; They groped in the darknets of a reprobate minde, without light. They staggered like a drunken man, from one evil to another, being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness, full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity, whisperers, &c.

Secondly, We read another parallel in the whole Nation of the Jews (*Rom. 11. 8. 9. 10.*) *God hath given them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear unto this day;* that is, in the stile of Job, he hath taken away their hearts; and have not the Jews wandered ever since in a wilderness where there is no way? have they not groped in darkness without light?

Thirdly, Take the instance of all Apostate Christians, according to that grand Prophecie of the Apostle (*2 Thes. 11. 12.*) They had the light of truth shining to them, but did not receive the love of it. *For this cause God shall send them strong delusions that they should believe a lye,* they should be seduced and led into a wilderness of error, they should grope in the dark without light, and stagger from one lye to another, from one false way to another, like a drunken man, till they fell into that bottomless pit of destruction, as the Apostle shuts up that dreadful Prophecie (*verse 12.*) *That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.* God takes away the heart of the chief of the people of the earth, in reference to civil things, he also takes away the heart of the people of the

earth in reference to spiritual things; wandering, groping, tottering are the effects of both. When God doth the former, Kingdoms wander, grope and totter, when God doth the latter Churches do so: By the former the outward glory and beauty of mankind decayeth, and their inward by the latter. Churches and Kingdoms, the bodies and souls of men, decay, die and perish for ever, when God taketh away their hearts. And when he in justice doth this (as when he doth it, he alwaies doth) then he declares (which is *Jobs* scope in this whole discourse) that *with him is wisdom and strength, and that he also hath counsel and understanding.* And lest any should think that *Job* had all this while told stories, and spoken at random, he assures us in the next words, that he had spoken only what his own experiences and observations gave testimony unto: *Loe mine eye hath seen all this, &c.*

JOB.



JOB Chap. 13. Vers. 1, 2, 3, 4.

Loe, mine eye hath seen all this, mine ear hath heard and understood it.

What ye know, the same do I know also, I am not inferiour to you.

Surely I would speak to the Almighty, and I desire to reason with God.

But ye are forgers of lies, ye are all Physicians of no value.

THe friends of Job charged him with ignorance of God, and of his waies : To refute which, he made that excellent confession both of the power and wisdom of God in the Chapter foregoing, and concludeth his discourse upon those points, at the beginning of this, with an attestation to all, from his own knowledg and experience. Some joyn the two first verses of this 13th, to the last of the 12th Chapter, beginning this at the 3d. verse. And they who consent to their standing as a part of the 13th Chapter, yet interpret them as a transi-
Caput malim ordiri a ver. 3o sed transitio est. Merc.

Loe, mine eye hath seen all this, mine ear hath heard and understood it.

As if he had said, *To assure you that all is true which I have spoken and asserted, mine own eyes and ears are witnesses. We may give you the summe of his reasoning thus.*

That, which I have clearly seen, that which I have received from good hands, and from approved Authors, that which I have fully understood to be, is a truth.

But the whole matter which I have declared in the former Chapter, is such, as mine eye hath seen, mine ear hath heard, and my understanding hath fully apprehended. There--

Therefore those things are true, and ought to be received by you as truths.

Loe, mine eye hath seen all this, &c.

Here is a threefold knowledge laid down in this verse :

1. Knowledge by experience, *Loe, mine eye hath seen.*
2. Knowledge by tradition, or by teaching, *Mine ear hath heard.*
3. Knowledge by discourse, *Mine ear hath heard and understood it, that is, I have understood what I have seen and heard.*

Loe, mine eye hath seen.

Triplex cognitio, 1. oculorum per experientiam, 2. auris per traditionem, 3. intellectus per discursum.

In oculis mens et ratio intelligitur, quia, quia cognovimus vidisse dicimur. Sanct.

The eye is taken in Scripture two waies.

1. Figuratively, So it is put for the understanding, because as the eye is the light of the body; so the understanding is the light of the mind. An ignorant man is a blind man, how clear sighted soever the eye of his body is (*Deut. 29 4.*) *The Lord hath not given you an heart to perceive, and eyes to see, and ears to hear unto this day.* Here are three faculties, and three acts : 1. *The heart to perceive,* 2. *The eye to see,* 3. *The ear to hear.* The heart is sometimes put for the whole inward man, and then the eye and the ear are taken properly for the organs of the outward man : but we cannot interpret *Moses* so, for though the Lord had not given them an heart to perceive, yet they had bodily eyes to see, and ears to hear, they were neither deaf nor blind sensitively : so then, the two latter expressions import no more then the first; he hath not given you eyes to see, he hath not given you ears to hear, that is, you are utterly shut up in blindness and ignorance, or you have not hearts to perceive (*Luk. 24 31.*) *Their eyes were opened and they knew him.* They saw before, but they did not see discerningly, or with the light of their understandings. The business of the Gospel is to open the eye, to turn from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God (*Act. 26 18.*) That is, to convince the understanding, that, a state of sin is a state of darkness, and that the grace and favour of God to sinners is light, that, to be under the power of sin is to be under the power of Satan, and that it is both our duty and our happiness to turn to God. To see these things, and these our understandings only can see, is to have our eyes opened.

Some understand the text in *Job*, of the eye, in this tropical sense,

sense, and then it is coincident with the latter clause, the eye is the understanding. But rather take it literally, for the corporal eye, and so the eye importeth experience and observation, which come in, or are entertained at the eye.

Mine ear hath heard.

The ear is the sense of Discipline, knowledge enters at this port, when that of the eye is shut up either by a defect in nature, or by accident. They who are born blind, may be bred great Scholars, the ear can let in learning enough without the assistance of the eye. Hearing is a nearer servant to the understanding then seeing is.

Mine ear hath heard] The ear hears, either by instruction from man, or by Revelation from God, of which *Eliphaz* spake (*Chap. 4. 12.*) *Now a thing was secretly brought to me, and mine ear received a little thereof.* Here I conceive *Job* intends the former, having learned what he here avouches, from men learned and knowing in the ways of God.

Further, We may take both sight and hearing more largely, and then the whole is no more but a vehement affirmation, that *Job* did fully understand what himself had affirmed, as also what his friends had so largely argued. As if he had said, *I very well perceive what ye (my friends) have said, and indeed they are not new to me, experience hath taught me them before, and I have heard of them often, they are the received principles of wise and godly men, even such as I have seen, heard and understood, before ever I convers'd or changed a word with you.* And so these three expressions, *I have seen, heard and understood,* are but an amplification of the same thing, either implying that he understood them as clearly, as if his eye had seen them, or that which way soever any mans understanding can be helpt, his had, even by the ear and by the eye, both which had contributed their best furtherance, to furnish him with those notions. *Loe, mine eye hath seen, &c.*

Vidi, audiui, intellexi, assertionem continent & amplificationem: rei bene perspecta ac si eadem res per eandem vocem & synonymiam repetitur. Bold.

Hence Observe.

First, *That our senses are inlets to the understanding.*

Job placeth the understanding last, *Mine eye hath seen all this, and mine ear hath heard and understood it,* or understood it by the service of mine eye and of mine ear. The senses of the body are advantages to the mind: the eye doth not see for it self, or

for the body only, but the eye sees for the understanding : The ear doth not hear for it self, or for the body only, but the ear heareth for the understanding. The right use and diligent improvement of sense, improves us, both in knowledge and in holiness. While we look with the eye upon what God doth, while we attend with the ear what God speaks, we learn who God is, and what we must be. As the eye and the ear are servants to sin, so they are servants to grace : they are always servants to sin in wicked men, and sometimes they prove so in good men : An eye not watched takes in vain objects : *Thine eye (saith Solomon) shall behold the strange woman, and thine heart shall utter perverse things ;* the eye carrieth the message to the heart, and presently corrupts the spirit with the object which it beholds, if the object be corrupt. Hence the counsel of Solomon (*Prov. 23. 31.*) *Look not upon the Wine when it is red, when it giveth his colour in the Cup : Look not upon the Wine,* Why not ? Will the colour hurt us ? yes, The colour of the Wine will stain the eye, and the eye will stain the heart. As sad objects go quickly from the eye to the heart (*mine eye afflicteth mine heart, Lam. 3. 51.* so do lustful and vain objects ; they being taken in at the eye, do both affect and infect the heart in a moment. Let not these senses which the Lord hath given us for natural uses, to the body, and for spiritual uses, to the Soul ; let not these (I say) be abused or turned to the disservice of the body (much lesse) to the destruction and damnation of the Soul.

Secondly, *Job* having spoken with much plainness and confidence in the former Chapter about the dispensations of God, clears it here, that he had not spoken by rote, or without book, or tumbled out what he could not prove ; No (saith he) mine eye hath seen all this, mine ear hath heard and understood it.

Note from it,

It becometh us to be well assured our selves of what we teach unto others.

He that instructeth another should first be instructed himself, and should have, not only a sound of words at his tongue, but sound knowledge at his heart. As it is the duty of him that instructeth others, to practise what he speaks, so to be well assured of what he speaks : as his life should hold forth a pattern of that doctrine which he delivereth, so his understanding should hold the model of that doctrine which he delivereth : Thou that
teachest

teachest another, are not thou taught thy self? 'Tis sinful not to do what we teach, or to teach what we do not know. *A good man will advise no more than he will do, and a wise man will say no more than he understands.* Job was much assured that he knew what he taught his friends, when he affirms in the next verse, that he knew as much as any of his friends.

Verſ. 2. *What ye know, the same do I know also, I am not inferior to you.*

The Hebrew is, *According to your know or knowledge, is my knowledge, I am not below you in knowledge; Take knowledge in the matter, or in the measure, I am not inferior to you. I know the same things which ye know, I have extended my knowledge to as many particulars as you, and I know every particular as fully, and am as clear in it as your selves.* Secundum scire vel scientiam vestram & ego novi.

But doth not Job play the boaster? Doth not pride put forth its head at his tongue, while he speaks such language as this?

Job spake this sense and almost the same language at the third verse of the twelfth Chapter, where he saith, *I have understanding as well as you, I am not inferior to you, yea, who knoweth not such things as these?* Thither I refer the Reader for the meaning of this seeming, unbecoming, boast. I shall here only answer in general, that Job speaks not this ambitiously or arrogantly as they do, who love to live in the sound of their own commendations, who if others commend them not, will not fail to commend themselves: *What know ye that I know not?* Neither doth he speak this in contempt of his friends, as if he slighted or undervalued them: Job knew it to be, not only uncivil, but sinful to trample upon the reputations of his friends; to speak high words of himself, and basely of other men. Job speaks this, not because he delighted in it, but because he was necessitated to it. The Apostles Apology may be his (2 Cor. 11. 5.) *I suppose I was not a whit behind the very chiefest Apostles (here Paul speaks in as bragging language as Job doth) but I am become a fool in glorying: 'Tis folly to do so, yet he hath enough to vindicate his own wisdom, while he spake like a fool? even this, You have compelled me. If any should say Job became a fool in glorying, he had the same to say of his friends, which Paul had of the Corinthians, You have compelled me, you have put me upon it, I could not avoid it; while you have*

Non dicis hac arroganter & ambitiose, sed summa necessitate impulsus. Pined.

laid melow, and ranked me, not only among ignorant men, but even among the beaſts, was I not forced to ſtand up for my ſelf, and tell you plainly, that I knew as much as you, and that *I am not inferiour unto you*? Some in contempt of their teachers, are ready to ſay, what need we hear Sermons, we know as much as the Preacher can tell us? *Job* was not unwilling to hear the counſel of his ſervant, much leſs did he contemn the counſel of his friends. So then, Theſe words are a neceſſitated vindication of himſelf, he could not ſo forſake his own honour and reputation, as to let it lie in the duſt for fear he ſhould ſeem proud in ſpeak- ing for it. Though all ambitious contending with others, is odi- ous, yet no man ought to betray the truth, or his own integrity, leſt he ſhould be counted contentious. He buyes the opinion of an humble and of a peaceable man too dear, who either pays the Faith of God for it, or his own credit.

Verſ. 3. *Surely I would ſpeak to the Almighty, and I deſire to reaſon with God.*

QUON Non ſolum eſt par- ticula affirmativa ſed illativa cauſam red- dens.

Proſecto ego pro omnipo- tente loquar & diſceptare pro Deo forti- volo. Iun.

The word which we tranſlate [*Surely*] is not only a particule of aſſertion, but of illation, rendering a reaſon of what was ſaid be- fore. Some render it here, not *Surely*, but, *Therefore I would ſpeak to the Almighty*; as if he had ſaid, I am aſſured that God is good and juſt, and I have found men harſh and unequal to me, *Therefore I will ſpeak to the Almighty*.

There is alſo a different tranſlation of the whole verſe, thus *Surely I would ſpeak for the Almighty, and I would reaſon for God*. And ſo he confutes the ſuſpition of his friends concerning him, and their confidence of themſelves, as if he had darkened the glory of God, and they only were the aſſertors of it, as if he had oppoſed God, and they only had ſtood up to defend and main- tain his cauſe. *You think that you only have ſpoken on Gods ſide, and that I have ſpoken either to his diſſervice or of my ſelf, but indeed, I would ſpeak for God, I deſire to maintain the juſtice, honour, holineſs, mercy and goodneſs of God as much as any of you all, and I would as readily engage for him, as you or any man elſe, I would ſpeak for the Almighty, and I would plead for God*. We cannot have a better cauſe to plead than Gods, nor can any give us a better Fee. It is our duty to be Advocates for God, though we have nothing for our pains; how much more, when all that we have already, we have

have from him, and whatever we ſpeak or do for God and his cauſe, ſhall ſurely be remembred; God keepeth a book of remembrance of what the Saints ſpeak one to another, concerning their own caſes or troubles: then much more doth he keep a book of remembrance, when (according to this tranſlation) they ſpeak for the Almighty, and plead for God.

But the ſenſe runs more generally with our tranſlation; I would ſpeak to the Almighty, and I deſire to reaſon with God. And then the meaning is, as if Job had ſaid, I ſee I ſhall avail or profit my ſelf but little by any further conference with you, therefore I deſire to turn my ſelf to God, from whom I am ſure of a good answer.

Again, Job ſeemeth to comply with what Bophar had ſpoken (Chap. 11. 5.) O that God would ſpeak, and open his lips againſt thee! Job accepts his wiſh, You have ſaid, O that God would ſpeak; I deſire no other, I alſo would ſpeak to the Almighty, I would reaſon with God, what in your account would be my puniſhment; I would receive as a great happineſs; yea I make it my requeſt that I may ſpeak with the Almighty, and that I might reaſon with God. Thus he declareth the confidence he had in the goodneſs of his cauſe, as alſo the clearneſs of his conſcience, both which were ſuch as did not fear, no not the preſence of God himſelf.

And I deſire to reaſon with God. This part of the verſe is of the ſame intendment with the former. The word ſignifies to reaſon by way of formal diſpute, where arguments or mediums are held out, upon which we conclude the truth of our opinion or poſition. The Jews call Loſack by this name.

The Septuagint do ſomewhat allay and modify the words, ſuppoſing Job too bold and free in this offer, therefore they add, I would reaſon with God, if he pleaſe to give me leave, or if he will accept of me in it. The Supplement is pious, and is to be underſtood in all expreſſions of this nature. What any man at any time deſires of God, he muſt do it with ſubmiſſion to the will of God; unleſs God hath already declared his will concerning that deſire.

But I ſuppoſe God ſhould have hearkened to *Job*, and granted him this requeſt; could *Job* make any improvement of it? Is it poſſible for duſt and aſhes, for fleſh and blood to proſper in a contention with the Almighty, or to reaſon the cauſe with God, and carry it? Yea, is it poſſible for man to ſpeak at all with the Almighty, or to reaſon with God?

I anſwer, *Job* ſpeaks thus, not as if he thought that God and he could perſonally, or as we ſay, hand in hand ſpeak together, and reaſon out the caſe. It is true, God ſometimes hath ſpoken with man; but then it was in a humane ſhape (*Gen. 18. &c.*) And when it is ſaid that he ſpoke with *Moses* face to face, as a man ſpeaketh to his friend, *Exod. 33. 11.* yet *Moses* did not, nor indeed could he, ſee the face of God (*verſ. 20.*) God manifeſted himſelf familiarly and plainly to him; this was ſpeaking face to face. So, all that *Job* deſires, is but a liberty to open his mind freely to God, and to receive anſwer from God in what way he ſhould appoint. As if he had ſaid, *I had rather ſpeak with God himſelf, than with you my friends, and I doubt not but I ſhall find at laſt a more favourable hearing from him, than I have yet had from you.*

Non ipſius de-
cuſandi ſed cri-
minationis ve-
ſtre reſellendi
gratia, cauſam
meam apud ejus
tribunal agere
diſidero: non ut
ejus judicia di-
ſputare velim,
ſed ut veſtros
errores deſtru-
erem. Aquin.

Again, *Job* doth not deſire to reaſon or ſpeak with God as an adverſary, but as a Judge: He had no controverſie with God; but he applies himſelf to God for the determining and ending of the controverſie which he had with his friends.

Laſtly, *Job* did not ſuſpect that there was any the leaſt error in the proceedings of God with him, but his hope was to make it appear, even before the tribunal of God (if he could be admitted thither) that his friends had erred in their proceedings with him, and opinion of him.

Hence Obſerve.

Fiſt, That man naturally ſeeks refuge, when he finds himſelf oppreſſed.

Job found himſelf oppreſſed upon earth, therefore he hath reſort to heaven. This Text is *Job's* appeal. When the Apoſtle *Paul* found himſelf overborn by the clamours of the Jews, he ſaith, *I appeal unto Ceſar.* We, in ſuch a condition, may appeal to Chriſt. Which we are pitched upon, Faith turns to God. And that is one of the advantages which the Saints gain by their hard uſage in the world, and the troubles of this life; they con-
verſe more with, and draw nearer unto God, who is the com-
fort

ſort of our lives. We are never happy in our diſtances from God, and when we are near him, nothing can make us unhappy.

There are three things in God, which may encourage us to communicate our condition, and ſpread our cauſe before him.

Fiſt, The clearneſs of his underſtanding : He knoweth all things and perſons, and he kneweth them inſallibly. 'Tis a miſery to be bound to the award of blind Judges, or of thoſe who will not ſee. There is no ignorance at all in God, neither can any thing pervert his knowledge. That which deterrſ Hypocrites, invites the ſincere into the preſence of God, *his omnifcience*. They can daub up their matters with mud, but God looks through all their Morter, and ſearcheth that which they would not have ſeen at all, *the heart*. Our hearts are as open to him as our faces are, and our thoughts as conſpicuous as our actions. Now (I ſay) that which diſcourageth Hypocrites, encourages the upright in heart, though they have many ſins and corruptions about them, yet they know God knoweth that their corruptions are a burden to them, and their ſin their ſorrow : They know, he knows alſo the integrity of their hearts, and the ſtate of their cauſe. God is ſuch a Judge as needeth none to inform him, neither can any by miſ-informations, miſlead his judgment.

Secondly, As God knows the right ſtate of our cauſe, and of our hearts, ſo he will do us right, he cannot be deceived; neither will he deceive; he rewarded every man according to his works. And as he commands his Miniſters, *To ſay unto the righteous, it ſhall be well with him, ſo he will ſay nothing but well unto the righteous. Shall not the judge of all the earth do right ?*

Thirdly, God is patient, he hears us out : he will not ſnap us up or cut us off in the managing of our cauſe. As he hath a piercing eye, ſo a patient ear; yea it is no burden to him to hear, how much ſoever he hears; though we are long in drawing out our minds, even ſo long as would be tedious unto men, and tire the ear of an Angel, yet God bids us ſay on, and ſpeak out all. Thus the unerring knowledge, the unſtained juſtice, and the unwearied patience of God, may invite all that are upright into his preſence, *Who would not ſpeak unto the Almighty, and deſire to reaſon with him ?* And ſo we do in Prayer and Holy Meditation, in the ſecret diſputes and reaſonings of our Souls. In all

all these we speak to the Almighty, and he hath promised to give us answer to our doubts, ease and satisfaction to our Spirits. Though God doth not appear visibly to us, or make answer audibly, yet when we speak in Faith, and with sincerity, he answers us really, and the effect is often made as clear to our experience, as if God had condescended to a free conference face to face.

Secondly, Forasmuch as Job after all these arguings with his friends, being still unsatisfied, desires to reason with God.

Observe, That when we cannot get satisfaction from men, we may yet expect it from God.

The reason of all things is in God, and though we must not reason with him, as *contenders*, yet we may and ought, as *Learners*. As it is the honour of Christ, that we should go to him for salvation, so for instruction. He is our Prophet, as well as our Priest, our Oracle as well as our Advocate. He speaks to us, as well as for us. What man cannot teach us, he will: We may carry our doubts from friend to friend, from Preacher to Preacher, and yet remain unresolved. As some sicknesses of the body are the *Physitians reproach*, he cannot remove them: so some Distempers and trouble of mind are (in that sense) the *Preachers reproach*, he cannot cure or quiet them: yet, both body and mind may find remedy in *speaking unto the Almighty, and in reasoning with God*. 'Tis a fault in many that they are so slow in asking God, and so forward in asking men. We should ask God before men, and make him not our refuge only but our choice; we should speak to the Almighty, not only when men give us no answer, but before we seek their answer. It becometh us upon any doubt to enquire, first, of God by prayer, and to hearken what he will say to us in it. Many have had their scruples and troubles taken away by an immediate work or moving of God upon their hearts; and 'tis sweetest and most refreshing when we have it so. It is the will of God that we should use means, and take advice, both of Christian friends, and of the Ministers of Christ; God often goeth fourth with their counsels, and makes them prosper: But if he withdraw his help from men, and appear not in their teachings, it is to draw us out yet more in seeking to be taught by him, and in desiring that he would give us our comforts with his own hand, and tell us good tidings of peace and mercy with his own mouth. So he may

may be said to do, when after prayer and wrestlings with him, we find our spirits enlightened with the truth, or refreshed with the comforts we have been seeking for.

Thirdly Observe,

That an upright heart is not afraid to reason with God himself.

That justice and majesty of God, which make rotten hearts tremble, make the righteous rejoyce : It gladdes them, not only that God is gracious and merciful, but that he is just and holy : *Sing unto the Lord (O ye Saints of his) and give thanks at the remembrance of his holiness*, Psal. 30. 4. The remembrance of Gods holiness, fills them with joy who are holy. Such love to reason with God, as much because he knows them, as because he is ready to pardon them. A godly man knows himself so sinful, that he needs the grace of God to pardon him, and yet he knows himself so sincere, that he fears not the justice of God should behold and try him. We say that is a good piece of cloath or stuff which the Merchant offers to a clear light, that is a good piece of gold which the pay-master willingly brings to the ballance and touchstone : So it is an argument of soundness and integrity, when the soul sets it self in the sight of God, who is light, and whose eye discerns what every one is : who also hath a ballance and a touchstone in his hand, to weigh all men, and to try what mettall they are. *David prayeth as hard to be searched as to be saved (Psal. 139. 23, 24.) Search me O God and know my heart, try me and know my thoughts, and see if there be any wicked way in me.* He knew he was a sinner, and he was assured God knew he was not wicked : had he been wicked, he would have had little minde to be searcht, or had his way been evil, he had never called to have it tryed. They that are deformed or foul-faced, hate the looking-glass. *And every one that doth evil, hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved (Joh. 3. 20.)* The word of God which is doctrinal light, deterres sinners, how much more doth God himself, who is essential light ? *The sinners in Zion (saith the Prophet) are afraid, fearfulness hath surprised the hypocrites, who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire ? who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings ?* Isa. 33. 14. But the Saints in Sion, they, who (as the same Prophet describes them in the next words) *walk righteously and speak uprightly*, they rejoyce in God as he is an everlasting burning, and as he is a devouring fire, for they know he

will neither devour nor burn them. God, who is a *devouring fire* to wicked men, is a *reviving sun* to those who fear his name, *Matth. 4. 1, 2.*

Verse 4. *But ye are forgers of lies, ye are all Physicians of no value.*

But] or, *For* (so it may be rendered) *ye are forgers of lies, &c.* This verse giveth a reason why *Job* would not continue any further debate with his friends, but apply himself to God. *Ye are forgers of lies.* Lying words can no more cure the minde, then improper medicines can heal the body : And he that speaks lying words, gives not only improper, but poisonous medicines to the minde.

Ye are forgers of lies.

780 *Compos-
nere concinnare
q d. vos estis
compositores
et quasi Archi-
tectos mendaci-
rum, significat
etiam unum ap-
plicare alteri ut
fabricantes
sol. nt.*

*Hos Augustinus
vocat fabulones
i. e. qui fabulas
vanas contexer-
unt Aug. Conf.
lib. 3. c. 6.*

This is a severe charge and a high one. To tell lies is bad enough, but to forge lies is far worse. The word signifies to dis-
pose or put any thing into exquisite order and method : As if he
had said, *You are composers of lies, you have the art of it, you are
lye-makers, master workmen at the trade, the chief of liars.* It
notes also the putting of one thing upon another, or the fitting
them together, which is a further aggravation, you (which is
the custom of common liars) put this lye upon that, and fit one
to another, as a Joyner doth board to board in one frame. The
Italian reads, *ye are botchers of lyes*, you gather up without or-
der whatsoever comes next to hand for the strengthening of
your cause. But *forging* doth properly belong to a Smith, who
puts his iron in the fire, to heat, and mollifie it, that he may work
it with his hammer into what shape and forme he pleaseth. Thus
liars do: they find a matter which is not shap'd fit for their turn
and purpose, therefore they put it into the fire of their own ima-
ginations, or into the flames of malice, and there they heat it, and
then with their wit they hammer and fashion it, and make it up
into an instrument to wound the honour and reputation of o-
thers. So *David* complains (*Psal. 50. 19.*) *Thou givest thy mouth
to evil, and thy tongue frameth deceit.* And again (*Psal. 119. 69.*)
The proud have forged a lye against me.

Observe from the propriety of the word, which he useth to
aggravate the greatness of their sin,

*That to be a plotter or contriver of sin, is worse then to be an
author of it.*

As

As every good action is by so much the better, so every evil action is by so much the worse, by how much it hath more, either of the head or heart in it. (*Psal. 5. 9.*) *Thou hatest the workers of iniquity.* (*Mat. 7. 23.*) *Depart from me ye that work iniquity.* You that set your wits on work, you, who as it were keep a shop to work evil in, and make a trade of it, depart from me. *They that will not part from sin, must depart from God, whether they will or no.* The best of Saints on earth, do that which is sinful, but they are (as we may say) bunglers at it in comparison of these who make it their work, or make a business of it. The Saints do evil as natural men do good, or perform holy duties; these do but slubber over holy duties; and they (in this sense) do but slubber over evil, they have not the skill, that hellish skill, to form it up and make it a curious piece. Here lies the spirit of wickedness: *That sin is most ugly and deformed in the sight of God, and of those who are godly, which is contrived and compleated with greatest exactness and curiosity.*

Ye are forgers of lyes] A lye may be taken two ways. Either more largely, for any falsity or untruth: Or secondly, more precisely and strictly, for that which is spoken, not only falsely, but knowingly, and with an intent to deceive. To lye, is to go against our own minds, or to affirm a thing which we are assured is not so. *Job* doth not charge his friends with lyes strictly taken, as if they had knowingly spoken that which was false, or as if they had done it with an intent and purpose to ensnare him: Such lying continued in, is inconsistent with godliness, and any one act of it strikes at the vitals of godliness. His friends supposed, and were very confident that they spake truth, and their aim was to instruct, not to intangle him by what they had spoken. As that which is well spoken, is often ill taken, so, that which is ill spoken, may have a good intent. 'Tis possible for a man to speak that which is false, with more honesty then some speak the truth: so did these friends of *Job*, who though they cannot be altogether excused, yet they must not be rashly censured. To clear up the matter yet further, consider, that

There is a threefold lye, he was shewed at the third verse of the eleventh Chapter.

1. A verbal lye, When we either make an untrue relation; or being asked, give a false answer to the question. Such was the lye of *Ananias* (*Act. 5. 3.*) *Why hath Satan filled thine heart to lye*

to the holy Ghost? The Apostle asked him if he sold the land for so much, yea, for so much, said he, when his own heart gave his tongue the lye for saying so.

2. There is a practical lye, When we act against what we speak, and unsay with our lives what we say with our lips: Many a mans hand gives his tongue the lye, and his works speak the falsity of his words. Lying is very abominable when it is only a tongue-craft, but it is then most abominable, when it is also a handy-craft.

3. There is a doctrinal lye, So is every error and unsound opinion. False notions are a lye in the understanding: The judgement mislead, misleads others. The Lord by his Prophet reproves such lyars (*Ezek. 13. 9.*) *Mine hand* (saith the Lord) *shall be upon the prophets that see vanity and divine lyes; that is, lying doctrines, as is expounded (vers. 22.) Because with lyes ye have made the heart of the righteous sad, whom I have not made sad, and strengthened the hands of the wicked that he should not return from his wicked way, by promising him life.* The Apostle John concludes against this sort of lyes, (*1 Joh. 2. 21.*) *No lye is of the truth*, that is, no doctrinal lye, either about matters to be believed, or to be done, either concerning the mysteries of faith, or the rules of a holy life, is of the truth. *Nothing but truth can flow out, or follow from that which is true*; as that old rule in logic teacheth us. Many lyes have a likeness to truth, and most lyes are so bold as to claim kindred and alliance to the truth, but no doctrinal lye doth indeed receive life or breath, or any thing from any doctrinal truth, much less from him who is essential truth: To both which we extend St. Johns negative conclusion, *No lye is of the truth.*

*Ex veris pos-
sunt nil nisi
vera sequi.*

*Mendacium eo
referendum est,
quod neg-
rectum in consi-
lando nec in ad-
monendo modum
tencant, sed in-
utilibus & in-
portunis consilijs
& orationibus
utantur. Pin.*

The lye which Job chargeth upon his friends in this place, is not a verbal lye, no nor a practical lye, but a doctrinal lye, as if he had said, *You have taught and maintained an error, though you have so great an opinion that you have all truth on your side: and that you are only upon the side of truth.*

But how doth it appear that his friends had forged doctrinal lyes, or maintained errors?

There are four things observable in their discourse with him, which give evidence to this accusation.

1. Because to defend the justice of God they concluded Job guilty: They knew not how to reconcile it; that God should be

be

be righteous in laying such afflictions upon him, unless he were unrighteous; this was a doctrinallye. The severest dealings of God with man in outward things, are no infallible marks of his disfavour, as hath been cleared more then once from the subject of this Book.

2. He might charge them with forging of lyes, because when they professed they came *to mourn with him and to comfort him* (Chap. 2d.) they in stead of comforting him, made him mourn, and in stead of wiping off his tears, caused him to weep. Their words were gall and vinegar, not oyl and honey, as he both expected and needed. They spake much of the law, much of justice, but not a word, or but very little of free grace, and mercy, and when they did, they did so cloud and clogge it with conditions, and legal restrictions, that the poor man could not at all lift up his head in any solid consolation. They were not careful to state his case right, or else it was hidden from their eyes, notwithstanding all their care: hence it was that they spake so much at random, as if they had not minded his condition, and laid load upon, in stead of easing his wearied soul.

*De lege multa
de gratia nihil
loquebantur.
Merc.*

3. He calleth them forgers of lyes, because Zophar had charged him with an affected curiosity in searching into the secrets of God, and in prying into those things which he would have hidden, chap. 11th. For, while he puts him that chiding question (vers. 7th.) *Canst thou by searching find out God? Canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection?* He intimates plainly that Job had been attempting to search out God, and had hopes to find him out unto perfection: This he speaks out, verse 12th. *For vain man would be wise, though he be born like a wilde asses colt.* As if he had said, *Thou hast an itch to be wise beyond sobriety, thou hast a moneths mind to feed thy fancy with hidden mysteries, the open truths of God will not serve thy turn:* Whereas indeed, Job only desired to have his cause cleared up to his own spirit, and to see the reason why God contended with him. He did not curiously intrude himself into the counsels of God, but sought that he might be better fitted to answer the call of God.

4. He taxeth them as forgers of lyes, because they thought he only made a shew of holiness, but was really wicked and false at heart. *Is this thy fear* (said Elipha?) *Is this thy hope? Is this thy uprightness?* see what an upright man thou art: Here's a goodly profession. While they charged him unjustly with

hypocriſie, which is a practical lye, he juſtly charged them with error, which is a doctrinal lye. If any man ſaith that himſelf is ſo holy, that there is no ſin in him, he lyes (ſaith the Apoſtle John, 2 Epift. chap. 1.) *and the truth is not in him*: and if any man ſay of another, becauſe he is outwardly-unhappy, that he lives in ſin, and hath no goodneſs in him, this man lyes too, and hath not that particular truth in him, which would teach him not to judge of mens perſons by events. Theſe things laid together might ſtir up the paſſion of Job to that high and unfriendly language againſt his friends, *Ye are forgers of lyes, and*

Ye are all Phyſicians of no value.

לְרֵאשִׁי
Medici nihili,
i. e. proſus vel
omnino vos eſtis
faſſi medici
וְלִרְאִי
Signifi-
cat, vanitatem,
faſſitatem, Ido-
lum.

There are two ſorts of Phyſicians, the one in a proper, the other in a metaphorical ſenſe. A Phyſician properly taken, is a Student in nature, and learned in the temper, conſtitution and parts of the body: his buſineſs lyes either in the preventing or curing of bodily diſeaſes, which are enemies to the life and ſubverters of the ſtrength of man. Jobs friends were not Phyſicians in this ſenſe, or if they were, yet he oppoſeth them not in their Philoſophy, but Divinity: And their errand to him, was not to heal the diſeaſe in his fleſh, but to remove the ſorrows and diſtempers of his ſpirit. His friends were his Phyſicians in a figure. In the ſame ſenſe that the ſoul is ſaid to be ſick, and the mind deſeaſed, the ſoul and the mind have their Phyſician. The ſoul-Phyſician doth not give counſel for the preparing of Medicines, but his very counſels are the Medicines, his word (that being the word or mind of God) is both the purge and cordial: Such Phyſicians Jobs friends would have been, but he complains of them, that, either their Medicines were ſpiritleſs, and had no effect at all, or elſe that they wrought too violently; and hence it is that though he call them by an honourable name, Phyſicians, yet he abates it by an undervaluing Epithete, *Phyſicians*

Of no value.

Ux paſtori
meo nihili.
Idol.

The word is uſed, though not in the ſame conſtruction (Zach. 11. 17.) *Wo to the Idol Shepherd*: Some render there to the ſhepherd of an Idol, or of a vain thing: others, *Wo to the ſhepherd*

of no value, or who is good for nothing, unleſs it be to feed upon, and devour the flock. The word *Elil*, ſignifieth vanity or falſehood, it ſignifieth alſo an Idol, ſome ſay from the root, *All*, in Engliſh, *nor*, and ſo *Elil*, is as much as *nullity*, or *nothingneſs*. Idols are nullities, *an Idol is nothing in the world* (1 Cor. 8.) and to ſay that a man is an *Idol Phyſitian*, is all one, as to ſay, he is no Phyſitian, or a Phyſitian of no value. Rabbi *Levi* notes that the duplication of the letter *lamed*, ſhews the extreame nothingneſs that was (as to this purpoſe) in theſe Phyſitians.

There are divers conjectures among interpreters about the reaſon of this ſtile.

Some thus, *Phyſitians of an Idol*, that is, you are to me like thoſe Phyſitians who undertake to cure a dumb Idol, a ſtock or a ſtone: For as they that give phyſick to an Idol, or apply medicines to a liveleſs Image, cannot profit it at all, or cauſe it to live, ſo you have done no more good to me then if you had beſtowed all your potions and medicines upon an Idol, for I am not at all healed nor recovered by them.

Secondly, One of the Rabbins tells us from the *Talmud*, that *Alal*, ſignifies the ſinew in the neck, or the neck bone, and ſo it is a proverbial ſpeech; when they would expreſs a vain boaſting Phyſitian, they ſay he is a *Phyſitian of the neck bone*: he that undertakes an impoſſible cure, is as one that undertakes to ſet the neck bone, which our Engliſh proverb puts among impoſſibles, *If you have broke your neck, come to me and I will ſet it*. This ſenſe may have ſome admittance here. As if Job had ſaid, *You are as Phyſitians of the neck bone, you promiſed to do great matters, to reſolve my doubts, and eaſe me of my ſorrows, but I ſee, (the way you go to work) it is impoſſible to be done. If a man, ſaith the Apoſtle (Gal. 6. 1.) be overtaken with a fault, ye that are ſpiritual reſtore ſuch a man in the ſpirit of meekneſs*. The word in the Greek ſignifies to ſet a bone, put him in joynt again, handle him gently and tenderly, reſtore him with a ſpirit of meekneſs, ſo it becomes a ſpiritual Phyſitian.

Thirdly, *A Phyſitian of no value, or an Idol Phyſitian*, is a Phyſitian who can do no more good then an Idol, which is none at all. The *Pſalmiſt* ſaith of Idols, *They have eyes and ſee not, hands and handle not, ears and hear not, feet and cannot walk: that is, there is no help to be had from them. Jobs friends gave him cauſe to call them Idol Phyſitians* in this ſenſe alſo. As if he

Simpliciffimum eſt 778 pro nibilo exponere ab 778 non, hinc Idola d. ſ. a quaſi nibilitates. Merc.

Rabbi Levi notat eſſe deductum ab 778 non, geminata litera lamed, ad extremam nullitatem indicandam Medici idoli,

i. e. ſicut medici qui curant Idolum, truncum aut ſtipitem, qui quavis multa adhibeant pharmaca nihil efficiunt Pined.

Apud Talmu- diſta 778 eſt

nerum colli, qui ſi laſus fuerit nunquam poſtea curari poteſt, unde medici 778 diſti, qui quod promittunt

praſtare non poſſunt. R. Sol.

Medici Idoli, i. e. veluti Idola

mortua ſine ſenſu ſine auxilio,

ut lapideum Apollo aut legne- um Aſculapim.

had

*Homo homini
Deut.*

had said, *A statue upon a wall, or the picture of a Physician, an Apollo cut in a stone, or an Esculapins in a wood, might have cured me as much as you have done: yea you have rather done me hurt then good. Whereas a man should be not only a Physician but a God to man, you are not so much as men, ye are but Idols; your words help me no more then a stock or a stone, which cannot give to him that is in want, nor refresh him that is weak.*

Fourthly, We may take the words in a more mollifying sense. *Ye are Physicians of no value*, that is, you are unskilful Physicians, you have neither brought that credit to your selves, nor that comfort to me which I expected; your art hath failed you, and your practice is unsuccessful.

There are four things that make a Physician of no value, or his labour of no effect, and all these did meet in *Jobs* friends.

1. When a Physician doth not fully know the name or nature of that disease, under which his patient laboureth. We say, *If a disease be known it is half cured; whereas he that doth not know it can never cure it, unless by guess or accident.* Such cure as *Empericks*, not as Physicians, if they cure at all.

2. As a Physician should know the name and nature of the disease, so, that he may be a Physician of value, he must know the cause of the disease. The cure is found in the cause: to discover whence the distemper grew, and what the occasion of it was, directs unto the remedy.

3. He is a Physician of no value, who giveth hurtful medicines, medicines that are unsafe and noxious, such as rather kill then cure.

*Vanus medicus
est qui esboro-
na medicamen-
ta agrotis exhi-
buerit, non ha-
bitat tamen e-
jus corporis vel
morbi ratione
&c. Merc.*

4. Suppose the medicine be in it self good, yet if it be not rightly applied, or not applied at a right time, the effect is lost. A man may do as much hurt by giving a good medicine, as by giving an ill one: For as we say of food, *that which is one mans meat, is another mans poyson; so much more of physick, what is one mans help, is another mans death.* These four things must concur in a good Physician, and a failing in any of them makes a Physician of no value.

Job found friends (in some degree or other) failed in all these. They did not see into the nature of his trouble: they thought it to a punishment from the revenging hand of God as a Judge, when as it was but a tryal or a temptation from the chastening hand of God as a father: They did not discern the

true

true causes of it, they thought it was for the discovery of his hypocrisy, and of the justice of God: whereas it was for the discovery of his sincerity, and of the goodness of God: They prepared some medicines of unsound ingredients; as that God will speedily give outward good things to such as are good. And lastly, those that were found they misapplied: Thus Job was wounded with their salves, made sick with their medicines, and his very Physicians were a disease unto him.

Affected by his senses but covetous, and selfish of them.

Hence Observe,

First, From the allusion, *That the soul hath its sickness as well as the body.*

The soul hath its fevers, consumptions and impostumations: There is not any disease of the body, but some have curiously found out a parallel distemper in the soul. Solomon in his prayer at the dedication of the Temple calls every one to know the plague of his own briars. 'Tis hard to know our own spiritual diseases, but it is harder to know the diseases of other mens spirits.

Secondly, Observe,

Good counsel and wholesome instruction is as physick and medicine to the soul.

As the word is meat, so medicine too: the word is meat to feed and refresh the healthy soul, and the word is medicine to cure and raise the soul that is weak and sickly. There is no soul-disease, but we may find a remedy for it in the word. The Lord (saith the Prophet, *Isa. 50. 3, 4.*) hath given me the tongue of the learned (what learning was it? was it the learning of Philosophers? No; it was this) *That I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary.* There is a word which will ease the soul of its burden, and cure the soul of its disease, if it be spoken in its season.

Alms give? 3 cases mention of truth.

Thirdly, Observe,

He is a soul-physician of no value, who makes wrong application of truths, as well as he who applies that which is false.

To preach the Law, and the severity of it, to preach the Justice of God and the severity of it, these are truths: but for a man to preach these to a poor broken soul, to a soul that lieth languishing and trembling under the hand of God; to a soul that hath the pillars of its comfort shaken with the beatings of divine wrath, this man is a *Physician of no value.* For though the things

are true, yet they are ill tim'd and applied: such a soul should have supports and cordials from the Covenant of Grace, to refresh his fainting spirits: such a one should have the oil of gladness poured into his wounds, his belly should be filled with the strongest wine of consolation: On the other hand, when a soul is stubborn in impenitency, or high-blown with presumption, going on in the pride of his heart, yet saying I shall have peace; to apply promises of mercy, the glad tidings of salvation, the freeness of grace to such a soul, may be its hardening and undoing: Though mercy may be rendered to the ungodly for God justifieth the ungodly; yet we must not say to a man that perseveres in his ungodliness, that God will justify him, but that God will condemn him. The worst of sinners may be saved, but we must let him know God will not save him in his sin. Woe unto us if we cry peace to those who make war with God. To deal gently with such, is to be cruel both to theirs and our own souls. Such must be thundered at, as Paul did at Elymas (Acts. 13. 10.) *Thou Child of the Devil and enemy to all Righteousness*: This was the language even of Paul who preached the grace of the Gospel as high as ever man did. To flatter those that persevere in sin, is to destroy them; smooth words to the wicked are as drawn swords: The doctrine of the law and the doctrine of free grace must be preached distinctly, and set out in their several natures, and rightly applied to their proper objects. We may be Physicians of no value while we prescribe that which in its own nature is wholesome physick. The word of God must be rightly divided: Every soul must have his own portion. The childrens bread is not for dogs: And though they who are dogs in the sense of their own unworthiness may gather up the crumbs that fall from, yea may eat the whole loaf (whole Christ) which is upon the childrens table, yet they who are dogs indeed ought not to be offered a crum of it. The Prophet *Ezekiel* reproves the false prophets severely for misapplying the threatenings and promises of God, for giving bread to the dogs, and throwing stones at the children. *Will you pollute me* (saith God) *chap. 13. 19.* among my people? How is God polluted? He is infinitely above all pollution. He is polluted when any shall make him the author and maintainer of their lies, or when they speak so of his truths that they encourage any in their pollutions. We pollute the word of God (yea God himself) when we misapply

apply it to favour and side with the pollutions of evil men, or when we do not apply it to ease and revive the spirits of good men. *Will ye pollute me among my people, to slay the souls that should not die; and so save the souls that should die?* The souls that should not die are said to be slain; when we threaten where we should promise; and not save the souls alive that should not live, when we promise where we should threaten. Though the unskilfulness or unfaithfulness of man cannot make the faithfulness and counsels of God of none effect, either by slaying one soul of whom he hath said, *live*, or by saving one soul of whom he hath said, *die*. Yet they whose words run against the word and will of God, are justly charged with slaying those whom God will save, and with saving those whom God will slay. As they who willingly scandalize a brother by any, to him doubtful practice, are said to destroy him for whom Christ died (*Rom. 2. 23. 1 Cor. 8. 21.*) because they do as much as themselves to destroy and cause him to perish for whom Christ died, though indeed it be impossible for such to perish or be destroyed. So also are we to expound the Prophet; these do what in them lies to slay the souls that should live, though indeed such shall not be slain: and this, if any thing, is to be, as *Job* rebukes his friends, a *Physician of no value*. *And didst thou say, I am good as gold; saying I was as good as silver as never a whit, as never the better.* Had I been as good as gold, I had never the better. *Job* having thus reproved his friends, and made an appeal to God, gives them advice in the next words, nor to speak a word more unless it were to better purpose than what they had already spoken. *Which you would altogether hold your peace.*

Which you would altogether hold your peace.

Which you would altogether hold your peace.

Which you would altogether hold your peace.

Which you would altogether hold your peace.

Job Chap. 13. Vers. 5, 6, 7, 8.

O that you would altogether hold your peace, and it should be
your wisdom. Now how much do you think you will
Hear him my reasoning, and bear him to the pleading of my
heart.

Will you speak wickedly for God? and talk deceitfully for him?

will ye accept his person? will ye command for God?

250 Having shew'd his friends their error in what they had spoken, desir'd they would speak no more, unless they could do it to better purpose. He calls upon them aloud to stop their mouths (Psalm 130) and to open their ears (Psalm 115) being very far from suspecting that he would thin thus much. He prefaces this counsel by disquising which two of which we have in this Context all the branches of new are all of.

5. The first at the close of the 5th verse, and it should be your
misquoting the argument in this, it is left to the which will
be your friend if you do it. I have therefore made and copy it
here, to be filed and being with your friends. Therefore you were
left to follow my advice, and hold your peace.

2) A second argument is contained in the 7th and 8th verses, and it is drawn from the sin and danger of it, in case they should proceed to speak as they had done: *Will you speak wickedly for God?* &c. He seems to reason with them thus: *It is not good for you to go on in sin and wickedness. But in speaking thus, ye sin, and do wickedly: Therefore it is not good for you to go on in speaking thus: be ye therefore silent, and attend unto what I have now to say.*

O that ye would altogether hold your peace!

**Quis des ne ta-
cende tacetis.**

Ubi Fadis, a-
ravit, per am-
phras, nihil
exit, stat.

Q. *Is he?* The Hebrew is, *Who would give this to you?* Or, *Of this some body would bestow this gift*, the gift of silence, *unto you*, unless you had a happier gift in speaking.

That ye would altogether hold your peace!

The word which we translate, is hold: the power, or to be strong

signifies properly to dig or plow the ground, to be very busy; and by an *Amiphrasis* (frequent in the Hebrew tongue, which imployes many words to contrary senses), it signifies to do nothing and to be silent, but to be altogether idle: so they are, who neither do nor speak. Further, Here is more than a bare wish for silence, here is an enforcement to it; *O that ye would altogether hold your peace!* The letter is, *O that you in being silent, would be silent, or, O that you would be most silent in silence!* Job thus strongly bespeaking the silence of his friends, may have a threefold reference; or at least he referreth to some one of these three things.

First, To the speech of Zophar, at the 3 Verse of the 11 Chapter, who had thus reproved Job, *Should thy lies make men hold their peace?* Here Job replies, As if he had said, *I was told me that it was unbecomely my lies should make men hold their peace; or that no man could hold his peace at my lies; but surely you have spoken such lies (so he charges them in the verse foregoing) and have talked so much at random, that it would very well become you to hold your peace, and to be as mute as fishes: so speak no more will be your best rhetoric; or rather, you will speak most when you speak no more; your silence will be more persuasive than your speech hath been.*

Secondly, This desire of perpetual silence, may have reference to that seven dayes silence which we read of in the second Chapter of this Book: when Job's friends came to mourn with him, and to comfort him, the text saith that they sat down seven dayes, and no man spake a word to him. Now, saith Job, *To hold your peace a great while when you came to me; truly it had been very well for me if you had altogether held your peace; and it would you would now remember your first posture; and as you began with silence, so conclude: sit and say nothing, O that you would altogether hold your peace.*

Thirdly, We may refer it to the whole matter of the contest between him and his friends. As if he had said, *I was much out of all that you have spoken, you have my as all about my pains, my afflictions, my losses, my confusions, my sorrows, my shame, my griefs, I wish you would give over speaking; leaving your speech to so foolish a purpose, I wish you would be speechless; O that you would altogether hold your peace! and whereas you have gained no reputation of wisdom by speaking, you may by forbearing or speaking as it followeth in the text.*

And it should be your wisdom.

Properly there is no wisdom in silence. Silence is a privative, at least a negative. As dumbness is a total, so silence is a temporary privation of speech: But wisdom is a positive, and among habits the most excellent habit. *He that is really a fool, is a fool though silent, he is not wise because he hides his folly.* So that, when Job saith, *It should be your wisdom*, his meaning is, this would be your wisest course; of the two you would shew your selves wiser men by silence; then by talking at such a rate of indiscretion as some of you have done. Silence may be the covering of folly, but no silence can be the cure of it: or silence may cause others to think we are wise, but it cannot make any man wise.

*Atq; utinam
saceretis ut pu-
saremini esse
sapientes. Vulg.*

(Prov. 17. 28.) Solomon giveth us that rule, *Even a fool when he holdeth his peace, is counted wise*; he doth not say he is wise, but he is counted so; he is counted wise, because he hath this happiness not to discover his want of wisdom. Yet further, as a fool may gain the reputation of that wisdom which he hath not, if he be but wise enough to hold his peace; so a wise man may shew the wisdom which he hath by holding his peace, when speaking is unseasonable; or when himself may learn by giving others, who are wiser and more able than himself, the greater liberty of speaking. It is a good piece of learning to learn not to speak, as well as to speak well: nature teaches us to speak, art teaches us to speak well; but virtue and grace teach us not to speak. A wise man will be silent as a learner, that he may be fitted to speak as a teacher. The Apostles Canon concerning women, hath its use in respect of many men, *Let them learn in silence*, 1 Tim. 2. 11. Hence Observe,

*Discamus pri-
us non loqui, ut
post modum ad
loquendum ora-
referamus, et
post multum si-
lentium ex di-
scipulis effici-
mur magistri.
Hieron. in 3.
cap. Eccles.*

First, That in some cases it is wisdom to be silent.

Solomon tells us (Eccles. 3. 9.) that there is a season for silence; *Everything is beautiful in its season*, so silence; and so is speech. It is a great part of prudence to know when to be silent, and when to speak. *When it is a time to be silent, and a time to speak.* When it is a time to speak, silence is our folly; and when it is a time to be silent, speaking is our folly. There are seven special seasons of speaking, and seven of silence.

The seven seasons of speaking are these;

1. (Which is a general) When by speaking we may bring glory to God, and do good to our brethren.

2. When

2. When we have an opportunity to vindicate the honour, and truth of God.

3. When we may relieve the credit of a brother that is wronged.

4. When, by speaking, we may instruct or direct those that are ignorant.

5. When we may comfort and support those that are weak.

6. When we may resolve and settle those that are in doubt.

7. When we may duly reprove and convince those that do evil.

At such times as these we have occasion to speak, and then it is our sin or our weakness, nothing at all of wisdom, to be silent.

There are also seven special seasons of silence, and then it is our wisdom not to speak. Such as these:

1. It is never in season to speak, till we have a call. 'Tis as impertinent to be busy with our tongue, as with our hands, in other men's matters, unless they be the providence of God, or our present duty bespeak us.

2. It is a season to be silent, when we are not rightly informed in or about the state of the matter or question to which we must speak: Such shall do well to speak their own doubts, but they are unfit to give others resolution. He must be a master of the question who makes a determination upon it: and until he hath the compass of it in himself, he can never draw it to a good conclusion.

3. When we know the state of a question, yet we must not speak without a suitable preparation, either actual or habitual: Be not rash to utter a thing before God or man. The Apostle James bids us be *swift to hear, and slow to speak*; yet we must not hear till we are prepared, then much less may we speak.

4. It is a season to be silent, when what we speak is like to be a snare unto our selves, *When they hate him that rebuketh in the gate, and abhor him that speaketh uprightly; when they afflict the just, and turn aside the poor in the gate (Amos 5. 10. 12.)* Then (vers. 13.) *the prudent shall keep silence, for it is an evil time.* But must not evil times, or the worst evils of worst times be spoken against, lest we bring our selves into an evil snare? Must we never

never ſpeak but when we are ſure to come off well and ſave our ſkins? Yes, at our peril we muſt ſpeak when there is greateſt peril: ſo did the ancient Prophet, ſo did the holy Apoſtles: Yet (though another interpretation may be given of that place in the Prophet, making the ſilence of the prudent in evil times to be their acquieſcence in the evils of puniſhment which God brings, not their quietneſs with the evils of ſin which men commit: and ſo their ſilence is oppoſed to murmuring againſt God, not to their ſpeaking againſt, or reproof of men) yet (I ſay) we may be ſilent from reprov- ing men, 1. When there is no probability that the evil which we bring our ſelves into ſhall be balanced with any proportionable good to others. 2. When thoſe ſins have been ſufficiently witneſſed againſt already, ſo that men ſin not for want of light, but directly againſt it. In ſuch a time as this we have no obligation to run upon our own danger. That's the rule of Chriſt (*Mat. 7. 6.*) *Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither caſt ye your pearls before ſwine, leſt they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rear you.* Where we ſee, as Chriſt will not have his word offered ſome ſort of obſtinate hardened ſinners (ſhadowed under the names of ſwine and dogs) leſt they ſhould abuſe it, ſo leſt they ſhould abuſe thoſe that bring it. He provides, as for the honour of the Goſpel, ſo for the ſafety of thoſe who publiſh the Goſpel.

5. As it is a ſeaſon for ſilence when the paſſions and corruptions of others are up, ſo when our own paſſions or corruptions are up. It had been better for meek *Moſes* to have held his peace, than to have ſpoken when the people provoked him to anger, for then he ſpoke unadviſedly with his lips, *Paſſion is an ill counſellor, and as bad a ſpeaker.* A man is not fit to reprove or ſpeak angrily, when he is angry. Storms at the tongue are never ſo reaſonable as when there is a calm upon the heart. He was a wiſe man, who when he ſaw a man angry, would adviſe him to ſay over all the letters of the alphabet, before he ventured to put any two of them together or ſpeak a word.

6. It is a ſeaſon for ſilence, when men are not capable of what we ſpeak. Words are loſt, not only upon a deaf ear, ſo, a fool, a mad man, but upon ſuch as are diſpoſed to abuſe them. *Abigail* ſaw it was no time to ſpeak to *Nabal* when he was drunken, and his heart merry with wine, therefore ſhe ſaid nothing, leſt or more till the morning light, 1 Sam. 25. 36. Chriſt tells his diſciples

(Job. 16. 12.) *I have many things to ſay unto you, but you cannot hear them now.* The *now* was not reaſonable, therefore Chriſt was ſilent.

7. It is a ſeaſon of ſilence, When what we ſpeak may be a grief and burthen to the ſpirits of any, eſpecially of thoſe that are already afflicted; we muſt not make the green wound bleed afreſh; nor at any time ſpeak to the wounding of any whom God would have us heal. In theſe caſes it is our wiſdom to hold our peace.

There are three ſorts of *peace-holders*.

First, there are ſome who hold their peace, and it is their cunning, they are ſilent upon deſign; it is not their wiſdom, but their craft; they will ſay nothing leſt they ſhould diſcover themſelves.

Secondly, There are others who hold their peace, and it is their weakneſs; They ſpeak not, becauſe they cannot ſpeak, either what they ought, or as they ought.

Thirdly, There are thoſe who hold their peace, and it is their wiſdom, as in the caſes before alleaged.

Secondly, Obſerve,

Speech diſcovereth what we are.

When Job ſaith, if you would hold your peace, *it ſhould be Eloquere ut ſe* your wiſdom, it was an argument that the ſpeech of theſe men *videam.*

had diſcover'd their folly: We may ſee what men are by what they ſpeak, as well as by what they do: and by theſe two, all of man, that is knowable by man, may be known. What we are in being, the ſame we are in acting and in ſpeaking, if we act or ſpeak our ſelves. Man is made as viſible by what he ſpeaks, as what he ſpeaks is audible. *Speech it is the Image of the ſoul, Oratio eſt ima-* the *looking-glaſs of the mind.* As we ſee our faces in a glaſs, *go vel ſpeculum* ſo others may ſee the face or representation of our ſpirits upon *animus vir eſt* our ſpeech. The faſhion of the body ſhines by reflexion in the glaſs, and the form and frame of our hearts is reflected from our lips. *ita ejus oratio.* Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth ſpeaketh: And as we take veſſels or glaſſes, and knock upon them, that by the ſound we may perceive whether they be whole or crackt; ſo the ſound which we make diſcovers whether we be crackt or ſound: The crack in the glaſs would not be ſeen eaſily, if it were not heard; and many a mans folly and ignorance would not appear, could he but keep his own counſel.

Job, having laboured to speak his friends into silence, now labours to gain audience whilst himself speaks.

Verse 6. *Hear now my reasoning, and hearken to the pleadings of my lips.*

Both the parts of the verse are of one interpretation; only the sense is heightened in the later.

Hear now my reasoning.

נִפְּלָה
Corrupti-
onem, confutat-
onem, reprehen-
sionem, abju-
gatione denotat;
ut apud Græcos
ἐλέγχοι.
Non imperiose
jubet, sed vehe-
menter optat.
Pined.

The word which we translate *reasoning*, signifies also, *reproof*, *redargution*, *correction*, or *conviction*.

We may take it for any discourse by way of argument, where- with a man doth either defend what himself, or reprove what others have done or spoken.

The form of speech is imperative or by way of command, yet we are not to take it, as if *Job* in a *Lordly tone* imposed silence upon his friends: though his language was *Imperative*, yet his spirit was not *Imperious*. His words carry a vehemency in counsel; not the authority of a command: As if he had said, *O that I could obtain thus much favour from you, that forbearing a while to say any more, you would now hear what I have to say.*

And hearken to the pleadings of my lips.

שָׁמַע
Notat
gestum diligen-
ter auscultatis:
plus valet quā
שָׁמַע sc. non
solum attende-
re, sed intendere
animum.

To *hearken*, is more then to *hear*; for it imports a man purposely setting himself in a posture to hear, or taking pains to hear; we may see the attention of the mind in the composed-ness of the body. He that *hearkens* puts himself into a learning frame. Careless behaviour shews a careless hearer. The word here used, notes mind and body in a readiness to catch any thing that is spoken, or the attention and intention of the ear and heart together.

To the pleadings of my lips.

וְנִפְּלָה
Et judi-
bio contendere
vel litigare; hinc
aliqui, licet,
vertunt, &
Tyrus consen-
suum.
Or, *to the chidings of my lips*; As if he had said, *I must deal sharply, severely and plainly with you, I must speak home and tell you your own*. Some conceive that *Job* useth this word to meet with the conception of his friends concerning what he had spoken. Come (saith he) *I knew you think I have been too sharp all this while, that I have been rather chiding then disputing; well, if*

You have that opinion of my former diſcourſe, let it be ſo; now come on, hear my bidings once more, hearken to my earneſt pleadings. Or (as others) to that Apologetical narration which I make for my ſelf.

Hence Obſerve,

First, *It is the duty of a man to make defence for himſelf, and to apologize in his own cauſe.*

He that is innocent muſt not let his integrity lie ſtained or blotted, and not ſtir his tongue to vindicate and diſperſe it. It is a duty to ſtand up for another who is wronged, much more for our ſelves, we being nearer to our ſelves than to any other.

Secondly, *It becomes us, not only to hear, but diligently to hearken unto them who deſire to ſet themſelves right in our thoughts.*

Some ears thirſt for ſlanders, and can greedily drink in an ill report of their brethren, yet will not have the patience to hear their defence. 'Tis hard to poſſeſs thoſe with the truth of a mans cauſe, who are prepoſſeſſed with an ill opinion of him. Love thinks no evil of others, and is not willing to hear it. Juſtice thinks no evil of others, till it hath heard it, and concludes no evil of others till it hath heard them. As the Judge muſt hear what the witneſs can ſay againſt the party accuſed, ſo what the party accuſed can ſay for himſelf: In this ſenſe, that of the Apoſtle James ſhould obtain with us; *be ſwift to hear, ſlow to ſpeak, and ſlow to wrath*, Jam. 1. 19. We ſhould be more forward to hear what a man can plead in his own juſtification, then we are to ſpeak to his condemnation; we ſhould be more forward to hear him, then to be wroth and angry with him.

Thirdly, Obſerve,

Man accounts it a diſhonour, if he be not heard and hearkened to when he ſpeaks.

Not to hear a mans words, is within a degree as diſgraceful, as to give him diſgraceful words. 'Tis ill when we only give another the hearing, who ſpeaks the truth; but it is worſe when we will not ſo much as give him a hearing. Some hear much and do not regard; others regard ſo little, that they do not hear; either of theſe is a ſlight put upon man. Now if it be a diſhonour to man to be ſlighted when he ſpeaks, what a diſhonour do they put upon God, who ſlight what he ſpeaks? How often (as Job

here with his friends) doth God plead with man for audience ? (*Psal. 81. 8.*) *Hear O my people, and I will testify unto thee ; O Israel if thou wilt hearken unto me.* How often did he send his Prophets, with, *Hear now the word of the Lord ?* And when after these, his own and his Prophets, wooings for attention to the words of his counsel and command, he found the people stopping their ears, and refusing to hear, how doth he again open his mouth in wrath, and thunder out words of cursing and consumption, which whether they would hear, or whether they would forbear, they must both see and feel. *Neither God nor man can bear it, to speak and not be heard. Hear now my reasoning.* (*saith Job*) *and hearken to the pleadings of my lips.*

Job having made his preface, and called for attention, enters upon the matter of his reproof.

Verse 7. *Will you speak wickedly for God? and talk deceitfully for him?*

Iam incipit discere sociorum refutare. Merc.
הלא
הלא

In this, and the next verse, *Job* doubleth his words ; and that he might make them hear twice, he speaks the same thing more than once. *Will ye speak wickedly for God ?* is the same with, *and talk deceitfully for him.* *Will ye accept his person ?* is the same with, *Will ye contend for God ?* In the heat of his discourse, he doth not only propose, but press, not only speak, but repeat what he had to say over and over. *Will ye speak wickedly for God? and talk deceitfully for him?* When we earnestly oppose what another saith or doth, we say, *Will ye, Will ye.*

Will ye speak wickedly for God ?

The letter is, *Will ye speak iniquity for God ?* There is a three-fold reading of that clause, *Will ye speak wickedly.* 1. of God. 2. to God. 3. for God. Mr. Broughton takes the first, *Will ye speak unrightly of the Almighty?* we the last, *Will ye speak wickedly for God?* The sense comes near to one in all three. The Septuagint render it as an argument why they should take heed what they speak, because of the person before whom they spake. *Do you not speak before God? and will ye speak deceitfully in his presence? Do you not know where you are? remember that you are in Gods presence, he sees and he hears you: Do you think that none hears you but I that am a poor creature in pain and misery? The great God of heaven and earth heareth you: Do you not speak before God? and if*

Namquid non coram Deo loquimini, & ante conspectum eius profertis dolum?

if you believe you do, will you speak deceitfully? This sense is very favourable, useful and close, but this reading is too wide for the Original text: Which though it may bear such an exposition, yet it cannot bear such a translation.

The words are clearer according unto our reading, *Will ye speak wickedly for God?* that is, Will you strain the truth for his sake? Will ye reproach me under pretence of honouring God? *Jobs* friends had great thoughts of God; doubtless they had, yet, their mistake was great, when to set up the glory of God, they darkened the innocency of man: In speaking thus, they *spoke wickedly for God.* As if *Job* had said, *Speak righteously for God as much as you will, so I desire to speak for God as much as you;* Dum ejus dicitis justitiam but you are so transported in defending the righteousness of God, me accusatis ut impium: itane Dei causa agenda ut ejus gratia mihi sitis iniqui? Merc. that you care not how you wrong me: The cause of God needs no such advocates; He will never thank you for condemning me, to justify his dealings with me: He is righteous in afflicting me, and I am not wicked because afflicted.

Hence Note,

First, That a good cause may be ill managed, and we may exceed our duty, while we are doing it.

There is no greater duty then to speak for God, yet it is possible to speak unskillfully when we speak for God. That zeal is without true knowledge, which obscures one truth, while it is clearing up another.

Secondly, Observe,

We must take heed we break not the rules of justice and charity to man, while we maintain the justice or truth of God.

Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, is the first and great commandment; and the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thy self: We cannot express our love to God, while we shut out love to man. God hath no delight in such love: And that doctrine which disjoins the love of God and man, is a lie for God. The Vulgar reads the text clearly to that sense, though with too much variation from the Original, *What hath God need of your lie?* The truth of God hath no need of our lie against man: We may bespeak many at this day, who undertake the cause of God, or at least pretend they do. *What hath God need of your slanders, or of your passions? hath God any need of your anger, of your revilings, wrath?* The wrath of man works not the righteousness of God. It is a dishonour unto God to be helped thus.

Numquid Deus indiget verbro mendacis? Vulg.

thus. As we muſt not do evil that good may come to our ſelves, ſo we muſt not do evil that good may come to God, *Rom. 3. 8.* The Apoſtle rejects the very thought of ſuch a delign with a kind of horreur and deteſtation; for he had no ſooner repeated that impudent and blaſphemous ſlander (*ſome affirm that we ſay, Let us do evil that good may come*) but preſently he blaſts both it and them, with this dreadful judgment, *whoſe damnation is juſt*: If they deſerved damnation, who put ſuch an opinion upon the Apoſtles, what do they who praſtiſe it? They who ſuppoſe themſelves ſuch ſkilful Alchymiſts, in drawing good out of evil, that (to try their ſkill) they will do evil, hoping to draw good out of it, ſhall find at laſt, that they have drawn damnation upon themſelves by that tryal. But ſome may object, Doth not the Apoſtle confeſs at the 7th verſe, that he had done evil for that end, and that having attained a good end, he thought himſelf excuſed for the evil of his way: *If the truth of God hath more abounded through my lie, unto his glory, why yet am I judged as a ſinner?* It ſeems then the Apoſtle had told lies for the upholding of truth, and that the truth of God had abounded to the glory of God through his lies. I anſwer, The Apoſtle doth not ſpeak thoſe words in his own perſon, or in the perſon of a godly man, but the perſon of a profane Objector, whom he confuteſh: As if he had ſaid, *Some man poſſibly may plead thus for his ſin: The truth of God hath gained by my lie, and if ſo, why am I judged as a ſinner? They are ſhining ſins indeed which cauſe the glory of God to ſhine more bright. Can I be a loſer where God gains? ſurely I cannot. I may rather encourage my ſelf to do evil (as we, ſaith the Apoſtle, are alſo affirmed to ſay) that good may come.* So then, the Apoſtle doth but repeat and reſute what ſome ſaid for themſelves, and of the Apoſtles; he doth not in the leaſt affirm it of himſelf. God often brings good out of the worſt of evils; but that's no thank to thoſe who commit the evil. Evil can produce nothing naturally but evil; it is a divine power and wiſdom which overmaſters it unto good. The way which God hath taught us to glorifie him by, is to do that which is good, and to ſpeak the truth; and though he can raiſe glory to himſelf out of the evil which we do, and out of the lies which we publiſh, yet he never calls for our evil or for our lie to raiſe his glory. The Pſalmiſt aſſures us (*Pſal. 18. 2.*) *My goodneſs extendeth not to thee*; and if God hath no need of

our goodness, ſurely he hath none of our evil: He wants not our help, though he beſpeaks it, and my command it: VVay then ſhould any man *ſpeak wickedly for God*?

And talk deceitfully for him? or, Talk deceit for him.

רמיה ע"י דר-
ception, & fru-
ſtration ut

The ſenſe is the ſame as before. The word which we tranſlate *deceit*, is a noun, and ſignifieth hope fruſtrated, or the deceiving of expectation. A bow which carries the arrow ſaſe, is thus expreſt, *a deceitful bow*, becauſe it fruſtrates the Archers aim, ſending an arrow beſide or above the mark. It ſignifies alſo a man that is *ſlow of foot*, dull and lazy, a man of a ſlegmaticque and unactive ſpirit: a ſlothfull man is a deceiver, he deceiveth himſelf, and he deceiveth thoſe that imploy and ſet him a work: he doth his own buſineſs but by *halves*, and if any truſt him he will deceive them *wholly*.

קשה רמיה
archus fruſtratus.

p'ger dicitur
אש רמיה

Quia decipitur
iſpe ſpe & fru-
ſtratur qui ei
quicquam com-
mittunt. Coc.

Job giveth yet a further charge upon his friends, in the expoſtulations of the next verſe.

Verſe 8. *Will ye accept his perſon? will ye contend for God?*

Will ye accept his perſon?

There is a different reading of theſe words. Some thus, *Will ye put your ſelves into the room or place of God? Will ye perſonate God?* ſo the word bears; ſignifying, as to accept, ſo to ſuſtain or repreſent another perſon. VVill you take upon you the place of God, or ſtand in his ſtead? Will ye be as Gods deputies and vicegerents, as if you had commiſſion under the great ſeal of heaven to deal thus with me? or will ye take the office of God upon you, to judge the heart, and of the ſecrets which are lodged there? You judge me an hypocrite; let me profeſs what I will of my own integrity, let me produce the faireſt proofs of my uprightness, yet you judge me an hypocrite, and conclude me a wicked man; will ye thus take the ſole privileged of God upon you, and judge my heart?

נחל In hac

phraſi, non tol-
lendi ſed acci-
piendi notionem
habet.

ſuſtentare, eo

quod patroni

clientium perſo-

nam quodamodo

ſuſtentant, Bol.

Faciem Dei ac-

cipere eſt perſo-

nam Dei agere

& repreſentare

& ejus vice ac

munere judi-

Hence Obſerve,

They that take upon them to judge the heart, or to judge of ſandſung.
that which doth not appear, take upon themſelves the place of Philip. Preſb.
God.

The heart is deceitful above all things, and deſperately wicked, who can know it? (Jer. 17. 9.) Man cannot know his own heart, much
leſs

less can he know the heart of another man. God takes that honour to himself (*vers. 10.*) *I the Lord search the heart.* Only he that is invisible, is able to see into that which is invisible. Christ gives a rule for judgment: *Judge not according to the appearance,* (*Job. 7. 24.*) yet we must not judge of that which doth not appear; we must search before we judge, because many things are not, either in regard of good or evil, as they appear; but if nothing appear after searching, we must suspend our judgment. That which doth not appear must be left to the judgment of God, at his appearing; so the Apostle directs (*1 Cor. 4. 5.*) *Judge nothing before the time:* What is the time? The next words shew it, *Till the Lord come;* that is, till he come to judgment. But must we reserve all judiciary proceedings to that day? No, Magistrates must do justice, and therefore they must judge every day. His meaning then is, judge nothing which doth not appear; he takes not away civil judgment upon proof (as some have abused that text) but only that judgment which hath no proof, as the Apostle explains himself in the sequel of that exhortation. *Judge nothing before the time, untill the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the heart.* As if he had said, That kind of judgment you must refer to the day of judgment, you must not judge of things hidden in darkness, or of the heart of man; ye may judge the works of men, or whatsoever shews it self in the open light.

We read, *Will ye accept his person?* Here two things are to be opened: 1. What it is to accept a person. 2. In what sense the friends of Job might be said to accept the person of God, or how his person may be said to be accepted.

The letter of the Original is, *Will ye accept or lift up his face?* This phrase of *lifting up the face*, hath a threefold different use in Scripture.

1. God is said to lift up his own face, and that intimates favour and kindness to man, (*Numb. 6. 26.*) *The Lord lift up his countenance (or face) upon thee, and give thee peace:* That is, the Lord bless thee, and do thee good.

2. Man is said to lift up his own face, and that noteth boldness and confidence (*Job 11. 15.*) *Then shalt thou lift up thy face without spot;* that is, thou shalt not be afraid to look any man in the face,

3. Man is ſaid to lift up the face of another; either the face of another man, or (as here) of God himſelf: and this ſignifies alwayes extraordinary favour, ſometimes illegal favour. (*Gen. 32. 20.*) Jacob ſends a preſent unto *Eſau*, and ſaith, *Peradventure he will accept, or lift up my face*: So (*Deut. 28. 50.*) the Lord threatneth his ancient people, that he would ſend ſuch enemies among them as *ſhould not regard the perſon* (ſo we tranſlate) or *not lift up the face of the old*: an old man full of gray hairs and venerable gravity ſhall have no more regard then a childe or a beardless boy. *The honourable man, is the man eminent in dignities, or whoſe face is lifted up* (*Iſa. 3. 3.*) The Lord threatned that he would make the prieſts contemptible, *becauſe they had been partial in the law*, or becauſe *they had accepted faces in or againſt the law* (*Mal. 2. 9.*) that is, becauſe they had done, or required ſuch and ſuch things to be done, not becauſe the law required them, or becauſe they ſaw it was the will of God in the law, but becauſe they ſaw it was for their own advantage and convenience: They perverted the law, both in opinion and practice, to pinch or favour men as they pleaſed. 'Tis ſaid of the jealous man (*Prov. 6. 35.*) that *he will not regard, (or not accept the face of) any ransom*, that is, he will not be moved by any gift to ſpare him that hath diſhonoured his bed.

Transferatur ad res inanimatas ut cum quis rem aliquam revereri & permagni ſtimare videtur, non tam res dignitate, quam pecuniarum aliqua ratione, aut ſpe lucri permoveat. Pined.

More diſtinctly, *To accept a perſon* conſiſts in theſe two things. Firſt, *When ſo thoſe who are like, we give an unlike judgment*. Secondly, *When ſo thoſe who are unlike, we give a like judgment*: To do this is to be partial, and to accept perſons in judgment. Liberality or bounty is not obliged to give like to thoſe who are like, but juſtice is. We may give as we will, but we muſt judge by a rule. God elects according to what is in himſelf, but he judges according to what is in us, or according to what we have done. When Jacob and Eſau were yet unborn, neither having done any good or evil, God loved Jacob and hated Eſau; this was not accepting of perſons, becauſe the Lord did this, not as a Judge, but as an Elector, ſo the Apoſtle ſtates it (*Rom. 9. 13, 12, 13.*) He loved the one and hated the other, though both were alike, *that his purpoſe according to election might ſtand, not of works, but of him that calleth*. Thus God elects perſons, but he is no reſpecter or accepter of perſons, for, *In every nation he that ſearcheth God and worketh rightouſneſs is accepted with him*, *Act. 10. 34.* God will not ask any man what country-man he is, or of what kindred

Proſopoleſia deſignatur, ſiquis paribus imparibus, vel imparibus paria tribuat. Coc.

he is, before he accepts him; For the Scripture saith, *whoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed, for there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him.* (Rom. 10. 12, 13.)

But if this be to accept persons, how could Job charge his friends with accepting the person of God?

For the clearing of this quare, I shall shew first negatively, how we are not to understand it; and then affirmatively, how we are.

First thus. We are not to understand it, as if Job's friends imagined that God had need of their favour in his cause: the usual reason why the persons of men are accepted, is because their cause cannot bear them out; he that hath a good cause never desires to have the sentence carried by any bias to his person; but he that distrusts his cause, useth all the means he can, he turns every stone to imagnate his person, or, as we say, to carry favour with the Judge. Job and his friends knew well enough that (as the Apostle affirms out of the Psalm, Rom. 3. 4.) *God must be justified in his sayings, and overcome when he either judgeth or is judged: The justice of his cause will carry him out against all men; Every mouth must be stopped; and all the world become guilty before God.*

Secondly, As God needs not any respect or favour to his person from the creature, so, its impossible that God should receive more respect or honour from the creature then doth belong to his person: We may quickly out-set our respects to the best of men, and offer them more then they are fit to receive: but God is infinitely exalted above all our praises, and is fit to receive more then we can offer. The Psalmist indeed saith that the Israelites flattered God. *When he slew them then they sought him, and they returned and enquired early after God: nevertheless they did flatter him with their mouth, and they lied unto him with their tongues, (Psal. 78: 36.)* But could they flatter God? Man is flattered, when thins are said to him which he hath not, or when he is applauded for what he hath, beyond the worth of it. God cannot be flattered thus: He is as much beyond flatterings as he is beyond sufferings. The Jews, then, are said to flatter God, not because they applauded him by fair speeches more then was his due, but because by fair speeches they hoped to prevent what themselves did deserve; or they flattered God with their own promises, not

with his praises. They ſinned againſt him, and he ſlew them, and when the ſword found them they ſought God, they creep'd to him and ſawn'd upon him, they came as with ropes about their necks, confeſſing they were worthy to dy, yet humbly begging for life; and if God would but ſheath his ſword and ſpare them, O what manner of men would they be in all holy converſation and godlineſs! Thus they flattered God with their mouth, while their hearts were *not* right: they made great ſhews of repentance and turning to God; but they meant no ſuch thing, this was their flattery: neither can the Lord be flattered any other way. And as he cannot be flattered by over-praiſing him, ſo his perſon cannot be accepted by over-reſpecting him.

So then, the meaning of Job in charging his friends with accepting the perſon of God, is only this, that he conceived his friends ſo zealous in liſting up the glory of God, that they cared not under what temptations and diſadvantages they left him *poor man*; they did not attend the law of love and pity towards him, in conjunction with the law of love and honour towards God. As if he had ſaid, *You ſer me miſerable, and you know God is juſt (I know he is ſo too)* Hence you infer, God being juſt he would never puniſh me thus if I were not unjuſt. Thus to advance the righteousneſs of God, you ſuſpect me of wickedneſs: and to maintain his truth, you charge me with falſeneſs of heart and ſecret hypochriſis. The former is your duty, but the later is your ſin; will ye thus reject my perſon that ye may accept his?

Hence Obſerve,

First, That to accept perſons in judgment cravieth the rule of juſtice.

'Tis unjuſtice to accept the perſon of God (in the ſence explained) how much more to accept the perſons of men? The Apoſtle profeſſeth ſtrongly (2 Cor. 5. 16.) Henceforth know we no man after the fleſh, yet though we have known Chriſt after the fleſh, yet now henceforth know we him no more, that is, we do not reſpect him for any fleſhly conſideration. That was once our error, we expected a Chriſt in outward pomp and worldly ſplendor, we looked for a Chriſt in robes of royalty, and in the majeſtick ſtate of earthly Princes, we were offended at his meaneſs and poverty, becauſe we ſaw no form or beauty in him; but we have learned to think, and judge otherwiſe of Chriſt. Now, If it be a ſin, or beſides our duty, to reſpect Chriſt after the fleſh,

how much more any Christian? We may argue so here, If it be a sin to accept the person of God, or by inclining to him to wrong men, how much more to accept the person of man, or by inclining to one man to wrong another. *Ye shall do no unrighteousness in judgment: Thou shalt not respect the person of the poor, nor honour the person of the mighty,* (Lev. 19.15.) As if he had said, ye cannot do that which is right in judgment, if ye respect the person of any man, high or low, rich or poor: some, possibly, may respect the person of the poor (though usually respect of person is given to the rich) but the law of God is so exact in this point, that if a poor man (or a man *in forma pauperis*) contend with, and sue him that is rich, yet, thou shalt not do the rich man wrong and say he is rich, he can bear it well enough, no, but if his cause be right, though his adversary be poor, let the rich man have his due. Magistrates are not called to do acts of charity, but of justice. Laws are made without respect of persons, but they are seldom executed without respect of persons. While the law is moulding and framing, the legislators know not what particular persons shall fall under it, therefore it is made without partiality or respect of persons. But the Judge too often remembers and studies the person as much or more than the law: His friend or his kinsman is in the cause, such a man recommends the business to him, who hath done him a courtesie, or may do it hereafter: Such a great man is concerned in it, who may do him an ill turn, or make an unpleasing representation of him at Court and in the Princes ear. These considerations corrupt the Judge, and turn him aside in judgment.

Secondly, Observe,

We accept the person of God, when under the title of doing him right we wrong man.

Some are zealous for God to the hurt of their brethren: and while they can suppose themselves acting for God, they care not what they act against man. Such a spirit the Prophet describes (Isa. 65.5.) *Your brethren that hated you, that cast you out for my names sake, said, Let the Lord be glorified:* As if he had said, while you shew hatred towards your brethren, you say it is in love to God, while you cast their persons out of your society, you say it is for the name of God: and that the Lord (say you) may be glorified, we must not spare any man, brother, or friend, one or other. So (Jer. 50.7.) *All that found them have devoured them* (he speaks,

speaks of those that went to seek God with their faces towards Zion, who sought to worship God in the exactest manner) and their answers are said, *we offend not*, (They thought they might eat up a man, with as little offence to God, or man, as to their own stomachs, when they had this to say for it;) *Because they have sinned against the Lord, the habitation of justice, even the Lord, the hope of their fathers*. These men have sinned against God, and we hope we must not bear with such: If we did not find them in an error, did they not wrong God and his truth, we would not do thus; but *we offend not*, for *they have sinned against the Lord, the habitation of justice, even the Lord, the hope of their fathers*. They concluded they might use them as they list when they had this plea, it is for the Lord. That's the reason of Christs premonition (Joh. 16. 2.) *They shall cast you out of the synagogues, yea the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doth God service*. 'Tis possible for men to seem inflamed with a zeal for God, while they put their brethren into flames.

And as this is true in regard of the persons of men, so of their doctrine: Some say God is honoured by such an opinion, and therefore it must needs be right. Papists maintain the doctrine of free-will, and tell us it is that God may be glorified, how else (say they) can we answer those exhortations and commands to repent and obey his voyce, if man have not free-will or a power to obey? Were it not a mock if God should bid man do that which he cannot do? Therefore that the honour of God may not be stained, the will of man must be advanced.

Arminians hold universal redemption; or that Christ died equally for all men. Now as the Papists pretend zeal for God in maintaining free-will, lest he should seem to mock in his commands; so these maintain universal redemption, lest God should seem to mock in his promises: For, say they, God offers grace and mercy, forgiveness of sins and life eternal unto all; hence they argue, if Christ died not for all, he doth but delude us in making these offers: Thus out of a respect to the person of God, they destroy the truths of God. For the truth is, man hath no free-will (before conversion) either to obey the commands of God, or to believe his promises; and yet the Lord in unspeakable wisdom and justice, yea and in mercy too, commands him to obey, and presents him promises to believe. These administrations of God are not arguments of mans ability, but of his duty; and while God in them

them ſhews man his duty he conveys an ability, he doth not bid a perſon unconverted obey and believe, becauſe he hath an inherent power to do them, but becauſe out of his free love and grace in Chriſt he intends to give him that power. And therefore the expedient for the removing of the former difficulties, is not to be found in the free-will of man, but in the free-grace of God: who though he requires what we are not able to do, yet enables us to do what he requires. If we ſeek other helps to eaſe us of theſe ſcruples, we ſhall be convinced at laſt, to have overthrowed the truth of God, while we would be thought zealous for his honour: And that is the ſin of accepting the perſon of God, whom we can never honour enough, either in his perſon, works or truths, *Will ye accept his perſon?*

Will ye contend for God?

It is not a fault but a duty to contend for God, to contend for God with our tongues, and to contend for God with our hands; (*Jud. 5. 23.*) *Meroz, was curſed becauſe they came not to the help of the Lord againſt the mighty.* Therefore when he ſaith, *Will ye contend for God?* He doth not blame them for the matter, their taking Gods part, but for the manner in which they did it. As if he had ſaid; *If you will engage as patrons of Gods cauſe, and contend for him, you muſt do it ſo as becomes the cauſe of God, you muſt not, to gratifie God, oppreſs the pooreſt man.*

2. We may give this ſence, *Do ye contend for God?* that is, do ye think God cannot maintain his own cauſe without you? When Gideon had deſtroyed the altar of *Baal*, and Joaſh his father defended the aſſion, Joaſh ſaith, *Will ye plead for Baal? will ye ſave him? if he be a God, let him plead for himſelf, becauſe one hath caſt down his altar* (*Judg. 6. 25.*) You need not trouble your ſelves; for if *Baal* be a god he will do well enough, he will ſet himſelf right, and maintain his own divinity. In that ſence alſo *Job* might here ſpeak to his friends, *Will ye contend for God?* Do ye think he is a *Baal*, one that cannot ſave himſelf and manage his own cauſe? doth he need you? he being the true God will plead for himſelf: therefore hold your peace and hear what I have to ſpeak. You have ſpoken wickedly for God, and talked deceitfully for him: you have ſo accepted his perſon and contended for him, that he will give you no thanks for your labour. *Job* yet proceedeth to give ſome further arguments, why they ſhould forbear to ſpeak, and give him further audience.

Jos Chap. 13. Verſ. 9, 10, 11, 12, 13.

Is it good that he ſhould ſearch you out, or as one man mocketh another, do you ſo mock him?

He will ſurely reprove you, if you do ſecretly accept perſons.

Shall not his excellency make you afraid, and his dread fall upon you?

Your remembrances are like unto aſhes, and your bodies to bodies of clay.

Hold your peace, let me alone, that I may ſpeak, and let come on me what will.

FO B ſtill perſiſts preſſing his friends to ſilence, and requiring audience for what he had to ſpeak. The ninth and tenth verſes are an appendix to, or an enlargement of his ſecond argument, which began at the ſixth verſe. There he expoſtulates, *Will you ſpeak wickedly for God? and talk deceitfully for him? Will ye accept his perſon? Will ye make ſuch adventures? and run ſuch hazards as theſe?* Here he diſſwades them from it. *Is it good that he ſhould ſearch you out* (verſ. 9.) if he do, you will have the worſt of it: for, *he will ſurely reprove you, if ye do ſecretly accept perſons*, verſ. 10. If you give wrong judgment for God, you ſhall not eſcape the juſt judgement of God.

His third argument is grounded upon the majeſty and greatneſs of God, verſ. 11. *Shall not his excellency make you afraid, &c.*

His fourth, upon their own frailty and weakneſs, verſ. 12. *Your remembrances are like unto aſhes*; and will you who are but duſt and aſhes ſpeak thus not only before, but concerning the high and the holy God?

From all theſe premiſes, he draws the wiſh of the 5th verſe, *O that you would altogether hold your peace*, into a concluſive charge, at the 13th verſe, *Hold your peace, &c.*

Verſe 9. *Is it good that he ſhould ſearch you out?*

The ſence of this phraſe (*is it good?*) was given at the 5th verſe of this tenth chapter. Good is here put for profitable or advantageous.

Some

Numquid ex-
istimatis utile
Deo sumum
quarere &
asciscere vos in
sua causa
patronos?
Non bene cedat
vobis si factum
vestrum discuf-
serit & propius
inspexerit ac
diligentius ex-
penderit. Merc.

תקן Investi-
gate, scrutari.

Some refer it to God, and expound it as if he had said, *Do you think it will be profitable for God to seek after you, to draw you to his party, or to the patronage of his cause?* Most like not your selves, God doth not want your help, he can maintain his cause, though he see not you for his advocates, though he make not you of his counsel. But I pass this as too strained an interpretation.

For Job intends this directly to his friends: and while he saith, *is it good that he should search you out?* his meaning is, it will be ill for you. It will be so far from your profit or benefit, from your ease or credit, that you will find it both your loss and your shame, if once God come and search you out. If God look more narrowly into this business, you will get nothing by it but a chiding, as is expressed in the next verse. *He will surely reprove you.*

The word signifies not only to search diligently, but to search judicially, or as a judge searcheth and tryeth a man or his cause. Job speaks of himself under this language in the exercise of his Magistracy, (chap. 29. 16.) *the cause which I knew not I searched out.* If any under the law, enticed their brethren to idolatry, saying, *let us serve other gods, then* (saith the Lord by Moses, Deut. 13. 14.) *shalt thou enquire and make search, and ask diligently, &c.* Man searcheth what he doth not know; God knoweth all things and yet he searcheth. He doth not search to inform himself in what he knoweth not, but he searcheth to inform or to assure us that he doth know. David prayeth, *search me, O Lord, and know my heart* (Psal. 139. 23.) yet he confesseth (vers. 1.) *O Lord, thou hast searched me and known me*; yea he knew God knew him without searching. There are no secrets to God: He knows by immediate intuition, not by discourse or inquisition.

So then, Job speaks of God after the manner of men, who make enquiries that they may know, and search that they may find.

But why should it not be good, or what hurt would it be to his friends, if God should search them out? I answer, Job supposed that his friends had not dealt fairly nor sincerely with him; and though he could not find out the unevenness of their spirits towards him, yet God could: He saw perfectly that they did not move upon right principles, that there was more of anger and animosity, then of zeal and charity in their discourse; that they had a desire rather to conquer him, then to comfort him, and that

that they were more busie in judging his person, then in applying remedies to remove his grief. Now, when God upon the search should find out such ill matter as this against them, could it be good to them? Surely such a discovery as this could not gain them either reward or approbation. *Is it good that he should search you out?*

Hence Observe,

First, *God is able to search out and discern the hearts and secret waies of all the children of men.*

He knows not only what we do, but with what heart and for what ends we do it. *His eyes* (do not only see, but) *consider, his eye-lids* (do not only behold, but) *try the children of men,* (*Psal. 11. 4.*) The eye-lids of man do not see at all, they only protect and fence the sight of the eye: But to shew that God is all sight, and all eye, his very eye-lids are said to do more than see, to try the children of men. *O Lord* (saith *David*, in the place lately cited) *thou hast searched me, and known me.* Man searches man and cannot know him; for, *what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man that is in him?* (*1 Cor. 2. 11.*) but the Spirit of God knows what is in man, he hath a thread which leads him unerringly, quite through the labyrinth of mans heart. *Thou hast known me, all over, thou knowest my down-sitting and uprising,* that is, whatsoever I go about or take in hand: *Yea, thou understandest my thoughts afar off*; that is, before I think them, or before they are born.

We cannot draw a curtain between God and our souls, nor spread a vail of secrecy over any of our actions. *The waies of a man are before the Lord, and he pondereth (as in a ballance) all his goings,* (*Prov. 5. 21.*)

Secondly, Observe,

It will be little to the profit or credit of hypocrites and evil doers, when God comes to search them.

Christ quickly espied among all his guests, the man that had not on him the wedding garment; and as soon as Christ spake to him, he was speechless. He was condemned in himself, because he had not prepared himself.

Three things arise from this consideration, by way of coral-lary.

First, *Take heed of sin, for God will search you out.* *Moses* tells the two tribes who desired to take up their inheritance on the

other side *Jordan*, that if they should prove false to their own proposals, their sin would surely find them out. But doth sin make search for the sinner? or will sin discover and betray it self? When he saith their sin would find them out, his meaning is, the revenging hand of God for sin would find them out. When we feel the effects and receive the rewards of sin, our sin finds us. Many lose both the sight and memory of the sins they have committed, but their sins keep the sight of them, or will follow them (as the hound doth the fleeing game) upon the scent, till they have found them out.

Secondly, *It is good for man to search himself, before the Lord searches him, or because the Lord will surely search him.* It will be our wisdom to bring our own works to the touchstone, for God will; to travel into our own hearts, and over our own lives, for God will. Let not any region of thy self be (*terra incognita*) an unknown land to thy self, for God walks through thee every day. God threatned to search *Jerusalem* with candles, because they had not searched themselves by the clear sun shine of his word. A sin of ignorance committed is less then a sin against knowledge, but to hide a sin we have committed, or to be wilfully ignorant of it, encreases it.

Lastly, *It is best for us by humble confession to make our sins known to God, seeing God doth search out our sins and will know them, whether we will or no.* Concealment doth not hide the eye of God from sin, but the mercy and pardoning grace of God from the sinner. The disguises which we put upon the evils which we have done, cannot make them less visible to, but more ugly in the sight of God. To assure that, is *Jobs* scope in the next clause of this verse.

Or as one mocketh another, so do ye so mock him?

hnm Proprie
est illudere,
mentiri, deci-
pere mentiri
illudendo, vel
illudere menti-
endo.

The word signifies to illude, to ly, to deceive, : to ly that we may deceive, or to deceive by lying. One man, or (as the propriety of the Original sounds) on poor, weak, sorry, sorrowful man may thus mock and deceive another; but can weak, sorry, silly man put cheats and deceits upon the strong, the wise, the only wise God?

But may we conceive that *Jobs* friends had any such design in hand, or that they were contriving a plot against God?

'Tis equally as vain and sinful to strive with God by our wit,

as it is by our strength, and we can as soon overcome him, as overreach him.

Neither did *Job* impute this to his friends, that they set themselves industriously to deceive or mock God, yet he might speak thus,

First, Because they handled the cause with weak and improper arguments, such as had only a shew or reason of divine authority in them, not the substance or reality of it; which imported, as if they supposed God himself would be taken with appearances and veri-similitudes: to be so, is indeed to be mocked and deceived. Upon this account *Job* chargeth them with mocking God. Neither is it against the laws of disputation to put such inferences upon anothers assertions or argumentations as may possibly flow or follow from them, though the arguer be free and far enough from any such intendment.

*Sane inter
disputandum
spectamus non
quid quisque sibi
propositum esse
dicat, sed quid
ex ipsius oratio-
ne consequatur.
Merl.*

Secondly, Because they (undertaking to plead the cause of God) might seem to deal like those Advocates, who to draw on their clients, and multiply their own fees, tell them their cause is good and that they doubt not of the day. Which though it were most true in regard of God and the cause it self he had in hand with *Job*, yet it was not true in regard of the grounds upon which his friends managed it, and held it forth.

Thirdly, He might speak thus, because they appearing as witnesses against him before the tribunal of God, might seem to deal like those witnesses who give a wrong testimony to mislead the judge, that he may give sentence against the innocent: thus an earthly Judge may be mocked or deceived. But (saith *Job*) do you think to mock or deceive God thus? Do you think because you have given such a hard testimony of me, and say, I am wicked, that he will take your word, and condemn me upon it? Do ye hope, either to corrupt and darken his understanding that he cannot see the right, or to over-persuade his will to act against what he sees, and to overthrow the right? please not your selves with the mis-representations of me and my cause to God: for he will quickly look through all the false colours you have laid upon it, and the fallacies that are in it; and you will find at last, that you have deceived your selves, not God, by all your insinuations of my deceit and hypocrisie towards God. As one man mocketh another, do you so mock him?

*Referendum
videtur ad in-
corruptum Dei
iudicium, quod
depravari de-
siderant, a
persuasioe aut
fraudentia
non potest. Phil.*

Hence Observe,

First, Man may be mocked and deceived by man.

D d d 2

That's

*Vulgus plerumque
credit omnia
qua a magnis
hominibus
audiri.*

That's supposed by *Job*, As the strength of man prevails over humane strength; so also doth the wit and understanding of man prevail over humane wit and understanding. And as some men are in reference to strength, so others are in reference to understanding, *children*. You may mock and cozen them; impose upon and delude them, even as if they were a company of little children.

As many wise men are led by the multitude, so the foolish multitude are easily led by any one, who is great in power or eminent in reputation for wisdom. *Two hundred men went after Absalom in their simplicity, and knew not any thing.* (1 Sam. 15. 12.) They were not of his counsel, nor privy to his conspiracy, he deluded them into treason. *Simon Magus bewitched the people of Samaria, giving out that himself was some great one, to whom they all gave heed from the least unto the greatest, saying, This man is the great power of God* (Act. 8. 9, 10.) But he did but mock them. Such impostors and mountebanks have in all ages put cheats upon simple people, not only in matters of state, but of religion. Popish priests and Jesuites have been greatest designers and actors in soul-mockeries: by these, God hath sent strong delusions among them who have not received the love of the truth, and they have believed lies.

Secondly, Observe,

God cannot be mocked by man.

Gal. 6. 7. *Be not deceived, God is not mocked.* Man never deceives himself so much, as when he thinks or attempts to deceive God. He often takes the wife in their own craftiness, but the craft of the wise never took him. *In vain* (saith Solomon) *is the net spread in the eye or sight of the silly bird*: If a weak man see the snare he will not come into it: There is no snare can be spread out of the eye and sight of God, and therefore he will never come into any snare. And as it is an impossible thing, so also a thing extremely perillous to go about to mock God: so much the Apostle infers from this principle: for he had no sooner laid down my conclusion, *God is not mocked*, but presently he subjoins, *Whatsoever a man soweth, that also shall he reap.* Our actions, good or bad, are like the seed sown, the reward of them is the harvest reaped; such as the seed sown is, such shall the corn reaped be; God will not give them a harvest of wheat and barley, who have sown tares and cockle. Many evil works are rewarded

warded by men with good, and most good works are rewarded by men with evil: but God is not unrighteous, either to give us good for evil, or evil for good. For though God bestows some common temporary benefits upon mankind in common; *will he his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sending rain on the just and unjust.* Matth. 5. 45. yet he bestows no special nor eternal favours upon them; and a time will shortly come, when they shall not enjoy those which are common, and temporary.

Thirdly, Observe, *We may be found mockers and dishonourers of God, while we think we are serving and honouring him.*

A good end will not excuse us while our way is unwarrantable.

Lastly, Observe, *We may be judged to do that which our actions speak, though we be far from such intentions.*

Job's friends had no such wicked purpose in their hearts as to mock God, yet Job had reason to charge them with it.

They, who having been enlightened fall away, are said to crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to open shame; (Heb. 6. 4, 5, 6.) And they who sin wilfully after they have received the knowledge of the truth, are said to tread under foot the Son of God, and to count the blood of the covenant as an unholy thing (Heb. 10. 26, 29.) Yet, possibly, neither of these do it formally and professedly: It is rare to hear of a Julian openly blaspheming the name, and spurning against the honour of Jesus Christ. Yet in effect, and by way of interpretation they all do it, who depart from the known truth, and give themselves up (after conviction) to the wayes and lusts of their own hearts.

Job having dissuaded his friends from accepting the person of God, and from speaking wickedly for him, proceeds on to shew them the danger of it in case they should dare to do so.

Verse 10. *He will surely reprove you, if ye do secretly accept persons.*

He will surely reprove you,

As if he had said, You must not expect favour at the hands of God if ye accept persons by speaking thus and so for favour. Will not the Judge of all the earth do right?

He

He will ſurely reprove you.

*Argued
arguer.*

The Hebrew is, *In reproving he will reprove you.* Which noteth two things. 1. The certainty of the action, and 2. The ſeverity of it. Firſt, *Certainty*, God will do it. We tranſlate: *He will ſurely*, or without doubt he will, there is no queſtion to be made of it, you ſhall be reprov'd. Secondly, *Severity*, In reproving he will reprove, that is, he will *thoroughly reprove you*, he will not do it to halves, no, he will rather do it double, as the words are doubled, *in reproving he will reprove you*; you ſhall have it both ſurely and ſeverely.

Reprove them I for what? He will reprove you for your unjuſt dealing; for your iniquity: the later words of the verſe clear that ſence, *He will reprove you, if you do ſecretly accept perſons*, that is, he will reprove you for accepting perſons. As (*Job. 16.*) the ſpirit is promiſed to come into the world, to reprove or convince the world, (that Greek word answers this in the Hebrew) he ſhall come to reprove the world of ſin, convincing them that they have ſinned, and ſhewing them what the deſert of ſin is.

Further, This reproving may be taken two waies. There is a verbal reproof, and a penal reproof. A reproof by ſpeaking, and a reproof by acting or inflicting puniſhment; both theſe waies we are to underſtand the text, *He will ſurely reprove you*, you ſhall have it both by words and blows.

Job in this ſeems to prophetic: for the event made good what he ſpeaks, as we read in *chap. 42.* of this book, *verſ. 7.* where the Lord, upon the concluſion of this debate, thus beſpeaks the friends of *Job*, *My wrath (he means Eliphaz) is kindled againſt thee, and againſt thy two friends, for ye have not ſpoken of me the thing that is right, as my ſervant Job hath.* Here is a reproof. *Job*, I ſay, did, as it were, prophetic what would come upon them, that ſurely ſooner or later, God would take them into his hand, and give them a ſound chiding, for their unſound arguing.

Hence Obſerve,

Firſt, *Sinners ſhall not eſcape the reproof of God.*

This reproof (for the clear underſtanding of the point) may be taken two waies.

Firſt, For a ſtop to what they would act: thus he doth very frequently reprove ſinners, ſtaying them from a progreſs in their ſins.

sins. (*Gen. 31.24,42.*) When Jacob departed from his Uncle Laban, Laban pursues him, but the Lord (*ver. 24.*) overtakes Laban, and tels him in a dream by night, *Take heed that thou speak not to Jacob either good or bad.* Jacob tels him in plain terms, *God rebuked, or reproved thee yesternight* (*vers. 42.*) It is the word in the text: As if he had said, Thou camest forth with a purpose to make me serve thee still, but the Lord hath reproved thee, he hath stopp thee in this design, and forbidden thee to speak either good or bad; that is, that thou speak not any things to me, either by way of threatening or of promise, to draw me back, and bring me to thine house again. We read of this reproof (*Psal. 105. 13,14,15.*) *When the people of the Lord were few, and strangers in the land, and did wander up and down from one kingdom to another people, he suffered no man to do them wrong, yea, he reproved kings for their sakes.* He reproved kings; this reproof was a stopping of their intendments, he would not suffer them to wrong his people. When Israel was mad in following Idols, the Lord saith, *I will hedge up thy way with thorns, and make a wall that she shall not find her path;* (*Hos. 2.6.*) It is an allusion to beasts, who are ready to break out of their pastures: the hedge stops or gives a turn. God in pursuance of his covenant, and with a gracious meaning to a revolting people, hedges them up by affliction to stop them from undoing. It is a mercy to be kept out of the pound, though it be by a thorn hedge, sharpest troubles. This stop the Lord doth often give, though he doth not stwaies give it unto sinners: he sometimes lets them run on to fill up their measure of sin, and to receive their full measure of punishment. Reproof for sin is a great favour, though the Lord be angry with us for what we have done, yet it is a favour that he will not let us do more, and so make ourselves more vile and miserable.

There is a second way of reproof; which all sinners shall certainly meet with. All sinners are not stopp in their way, but all sinners shall be blamed for going out of the way. Though the fact proceed, yet they shall be convinced, that there is a fault in the fact; and that it is an evil and a bitter thing to sin against the Lord (*Psal. 50. 21.* the hypocrite is described going on in sin, and flattering himself that God was like himself. But what saith the Lord, *I will reprove thee, and set thy sins in order before thine eyes.* Some men are afraid to reprove; many are unable to reprove: or if they be neither afraid nor unable, yet they may be

unwil-

unwilling to be at the pains and trouble of reproving: But the Lord will not forbear his reproof; God is not afraid of any mans great looks; nor doth he want ability to reprove and convince the stoutest sinners. He will convince the whole world, and stop every mouth, he will make every one know what he hath done, and acknowledge that he hath done amiss. Ordinary men, yea Ministers may flatter a people in their sins; and the Lord may leave them to such a judgement, that when they hate those that reprove in the gate, at last they shall have none to reprove in the gate: They shall have none but flatterers, even such as daube with untempered mortar, and sew pillows under their elbows, crying peace, peace, where there is no peace: Thus they shall fatten them up with flatteries against the slaughter of the great day; a man's own heart and conscience is not always in a case to reprove him. It is said of *David*, as soon as he had cut off the lap of *Saul's* garment, *his heart faulced him*; that is, his conscience reprov'd and check'd him; It is a happiness, that when others reprove not, conscience doth: But though conscience fail too, yet God will not; God is greater then our consciences; and when conscience is asleep, God neither slumbreth nor sleeperth, and at last he will awaken conscience too.

So that which way soever we are flattered, whether by men or Satan, or by our own consciences, yet God will surely reprove. Many are upheld by false testimonies in an opinion of their good estate, when as their estate is stark naught: For as there is a threefold testimony for the soul to assure it of a true peace, *The water, the blood, and the spirit*; so in an allusion we may say, that to flatter a man into an unsound peace, there is a threefold testimony, 1. from the world, 2. from Satan, 3. from a man's own heart, these three joyn together to deceiye the soul into a most dangerous security; but when they have done their best (which is indeed worst for us) to hide us from our selves, the Lord discovers all; no sinner shall escape his reproof, or if he escape it a while here, it is in judgement, and he shall not escape it when the Lord comes as Judge.

Secondly, Take it for reprovng by punishment, and then Note,

That no impenitent sinner shall escape the vengeance of God.
The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men (Rom. 1.18.) Tribulation and anguish upon

upon every ſoul of man that doth evil, of the Jew fiſt, and alſo of the Gentile (Rom. 2. 9.) There is a certain decree gone forth, and the word is ratified in heaven, that every ſin ſhall be puniſhed, puniſhed either in the perſon that doth commit it, or in his ſurety. The wages of ſin is death, and that either the ſinner muſt receive, or Chriſt, upon whom our ſins are laid. *He will ſurely reprove thee, if, &c.*

Thirdly, Obſerve,

God will reprove and puniſh ſinner ſeverely; he will do it to purpoſe when he doth it.

If we come under his hand, we ſhall feel his hand; if he rebuke us, we ſhall know he rebukes us; *Thou haſt chaſtiſed me* (ſaith Ephraim, Jer. 31.) *and I was chaſtiſed.* (Gen. 2. 17.) *In the day thou eatſt thereof, dying thou ſhalt dye* (which we tranſlate) *thou ſhalt ſurely dye*; There is a certainty and a ſeverity in it; thou ſhalt have a through death, death in thy body, and death in thy ſoul, a temporal death and an eternal death. There is ſeverity to thoſe that continue in their impenitency. Some reprove as if they did not reprove, their reproofs are ſoothings rather than reprovings. *Eli did not ſurely reprove*, he in reprovings did not reprove; he did rather ſmooth than rebuke his ſons; his words did rather encourage then humble them: If we compare, 1 Sam. 2. 23. with chap. 3. 13. we ſhall find what account God gave of his reproofs. *Eli* (1 Sam. 2. 23.) comes to his ſons and ſaith; *Why do ye ſuch things? for I hear of your evil doings by all this people.* Nay, my ſons, for it is no good report that I hear, ye make the Lord's people to tranſgreſs: And then telleth them, *If one man ſin againſt another, the judge ſhall judge him; but if a man ſin againſt the Lord, who ſhall intercede for him?* Here is a reproof, and, indeed, there is a great deal in it, but it did not come up to the nature of the ſin of thoſe men, he ſhould have ſtormed and thundred upon them, he ſhould have made his ſons ears to tingle, and their hearts to tremble; and becauſe he did not, therefore (chap. 3. 13.) the Lord ſent a meſſage to him by Samuel, *Behold, I will do aſhing in Iſrael, at which both the ears of every one that heareth it ſhall tingle, &c.* Becauſe his ſons made themſelves vile, and he reſtrained them not; or (according to the Hebrew) *frowned not upon them*. He either ſmiled or looked too pleaſingly upon his ſons, when he reprov'd them; this cauſed God to frown upon Eli, and brought ſore diſpleaſure upon his family. It is good for us

to reprove as God reproveth. Great sinners must have great reproofs: Some must be saved with fear, pulling them out of the fire; we must cast them into the fire, that they may escape the fire: Pitiſul cruelty is better than cruel pity. Some in dealing both with the ſinful practices and erroneous opinions of men handle them as men handle thorns; as if they durſt not touch them; this ſtrengthneth ſin, and confirmeth error: For as a cold and heartleſs petitioner invites a denial, ſo a cold and heartleſs reprover heartens the ſinner. The way to cure ſome ſouls is to beat them black and blew with reproofs, as the word uſed ſomewhere in the Epistles of *Paul* ſignifies. *Paul* exhorts *Titus* to rebuke the Cretians ſharply (or cuttingly) *that they may be found in the faith*. (Tit. 1. 13.) Soars muſt be cut and lanced, before they can be healed. God reproveth ſeverely, as well as certainly. *He will ſurely reprove you*.

If ye do ſecretly accept perſons.

As if he had ſaid, You may cover the matter, and put pretences or colours upon it, but God will find you out. Some translate the Original by *alſo though*, which makes the ſence clearer. *Alſo though ye do accept perſons ſecretly*, though ye carry it cunningly or hypocritically: Yet, &c. Many ſin, as it were, by art and are ſkilful to do evil: They can draw a fair ſkin over a putrified ſoar, and make the blackeſt and moſt deformed actions appear beautiful: the Pharifees were indeed corrupt and rotten carcaſſes, yet they looked like painted tombs; they were but rotten poſts, yet they were gilded over. Herein lies the cunning of ſinning, to do it ſecretly.

*Etiā ſi clam
perſonam acci-
piatis. Jun.
Si occulte &
per hypocrifin,
&c. Merc.*

*Ceriffimè vos
arguet ſi occul-
te in gratiam
enjuſſi, diſcedi-
tis a recto. Tyg.*

Others render this claule cauſally. *He will reprove you becauſe you do ſecretly accept perſons*: the cloſe carriage and contrivance of your ſin will cauſe you greater ſhame. *Job* ſpeaks not thus, as if they ſhould eſcape the reproofs of God who accept perſons openly: But

Fiſt, Becauſe men ſometimes do it openly and are not reprov'd. As if he had ſaid, you may perhaps do this ſo groſſely, that every man ſees it, and yet no man reprove or puniſh you for it; but though you do it ſecretly, God will reprove and puniſh you for it.

Secondly, It may have this meaning, *If ye do it ſecretly*, men cannot puniſh you, for they judge and puniſh only thoſe things

things that appear: Justice muſt proceed (*ſecundum allegata & probata*) according to what is alleged and proved. So that if you ſecretly accept perſons; men cannot deal with you; but God can: he will find you out and make you ſmart for it.

Hence Obſerve (I have opened before what it is to accept perſons, therefore I ſhall not ſtay upon it.)

First, *That to accept perſons is a very provoking ſin.*

He will ſurely reprove you, if you do ſecretly accept perſons. The accepting of, or the ſhewing favour to a perſon, may be as great a ſin as the oppreſſing of a perſon. And the reaſon of it is,

First, Becauſe the oppreſſion of one perſon is alwaies joyned with the accepting of another: and therefore though the very act of accepting a mans perſon, or the ſhewing more favour to a man then is due, may ſeem to have no fault, or but a ſmall one in it; yet becauſe the favour you ſhew to one doth redound to the wrong or oppreſſion of another, the ſin muſt needs be exceeding great.

Secondly, It is a provoking ſin to accept perſons, becauſe it is a ſin that cannot be committed but with a great deal of reſolvedneſs and premeditation. A man muſt know both perſons and cauſes before he can properly be ſaid to accept perſons. So that this is not a ſin which a man falls into through inadvertency or infirmity: Now, that which puts a great aggravation upon any ſin, is, to do it knowingly and premeditatedly. The more of our underſtanding or of our will is mixed with any ſin, the more ſinful it is; I know no ſin which hath more of either, then the accepting of perſons hath. Therefore God will ſurely reprove thoſe who accept perſons; what ſin ſoever eſcapeth, that ſhall not; you cannot plead an excuſe for it; nor is there any cloak for this ſin. It cannot be committed out of ignorance or infirmity, but upon will and election.

Thirdly, As the accepting of one perſon is a wrong to another, ſo it is ſuch a wrong as a man can have no repair for. He that hath the wrong knows not where to go to be righted. The accepting of perſons is a ſin againſt all laws, and yet we can hardly find any law againſt it.

Fourthly, They who ſit in judgment perſonate and repreſent God himſelf; and therefore while they accept perſons, they make God a partaker, yea, an aſtor in that which he moſt hateth.

And as this is a great ſin in civil judgement, ſo in ſpiritual. This S^t James ſhews (*Jam. 2. 2, 3, 4.*) *If there come one into your aſſembly with a gold ring, in goodly apparel, and you have reſpect to him, and ſay unto him, ſit thou here in a good place; and there come in alſo a poor man in vile raiment, and you ſay to the poor, ſtand thou there, &c. Are ye not then partial in your ſelves, and are become judges of evil thoughts? We muſt not have the faith of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, the Lord of glory, with reſpect of perſons. The Apoſtles reſolve for himſelf and his fellow Apoſtles, is (*2 Cor. 5. 16.*) *Henceforth know we no man after the fleſh, that is, we accept no mans perſon, in regard of any outward intereſt, as to the ſwaying of our judgement, to think well or ill, highly or meanly of them. External relations and differences muſt bear no weight at the Goſpel beam. It is as dangerous (if not more) to accept perſons in ſpiritual, as in civil judgement, and the Lord is a ſevere revenger of both.**

But ſome may ſay, If it were between man and man, ſo to accept perſons, the Lord might be angry indeed, but will not God favour an acceptor of perſons, when it is in favour to his own cauſe? No, he will not. That's the caſe here, *Will you (ſaith Job) accept the perſon of God?*

Hence Obſerve, *God will not bear it, that we ſhould wrong the meanest man for his ſake.*

Neither indeed can we do him right by doing injury to others. This doth infinitely advance the holineſs and purity of God; and convince the falſeneſs and wickedneſs of man. The Judges and Magiſtrates of the earth will do right between man and man, in an ordinary caſe between ſubject and ſubject of equal rank, but if it be the kings caſe, or if ſome great perſon be intereſted in it, how apt are Judges to lean towards greatneſs, and to give ſentence with the prince, though they lay it heavy upon the people! Now if God himſelf will not endure that any creature ſhould be wronged under a pretence of doing him right: How ſhall any men be born out, who favour the great ones of the world to the prejudice and undoing of inferiours? The Lord proteſts (*Iſa. 61. 8.*) *I the Lord love judgement, I hate robbery for burnt-offering*; See how he reproves thoſe who were very zealous to promote his cauſe. But is it blame-worthy to be zealous for God? No, Their zeal was good, but the means they uſed to expreſs

express it, was evil. They robbed men the better to enable them to bring offerings to God. They oppress their brethren that they might be liberal at the Temple. God testifies against this, *I hate robbery for burnt-offering.* Woe to those who rob men to enrich God. Some now promote preaching, and perhaps will set up a Lecture out of the overplus of their unjust gains. Though it be an excellent work to maintain the preaching of the Gospel, yet their work is bad enough, who gripe and grasp unjustly, and think to salve it by this, they are very liberal toward the promoting of the Gospel, this is to bring robbery for burnt-offering. Others extort and grate in their dealings, who please themselves with a purpose to be charitable to the poor, they will build Alms-houses, and give much in their *last wills to good uses*: The Lord hates robbery for charity, as well as for burnt-offerings. He rejects what we give, either to him or to his poor, if we give what we have unduly gotten.

Thirdly, *Job* saith, *He will surely reprove you, if ye secretly accept persons.* Thence Observe,

Secret sins, even heart sins are known unto God.

The Lord by *Nathan* tells *David*, *Thou didst it secretly, but I will do this thing before all Israel, and before the Sun.* Secret sins shall have open punishment, that which is done (whether good or evil) in a corner, God will proclaim upon the house top: Remember this, you that can sin smoothly and fairly, that can (when you have eat up your brethren) like the whore in the Proverbs, *wipe your mouths, and say, we have done no wickedness.*

I grant that in some sence secret sins are not so bad as open sins are: yet there are considerations which render them worse then open sins. Secret sins are not so bad as open sins in two respects. 1. Because they give no scandal to those that are good. 2. Because they do not infect by example, nor encourage those that are evil. Open sins are both scandalous and infectious, secret sins are neither. But if a man sin secretly upon design to hide his sin, or hoping to carry it so that God shall not find him out, this secrecy encreases sin, and shall have the greater condemnation. He that sins openly, appears to men what he is: but he that thus sins secretly thinks that it cannot appear to God what he is, or he hopes that God will never make it appear what he is. This is a great aggravation upon his sin, and therefore *Job* puts a mark upon

upon it, *He will surely reprove you, although you, or, if you do secretly accept persons: Do it as privately as you will, that shall be no excuse to you; though some secrecy may mitigate sin, yet no secrecy can acquit us of sin.*

Job goes on yet to humble his friends, and to shew them their error: he adds two arguments further, in the 11. and 12th verses. The first is taken from the Majesty of God, Shall not his excellency make you afraid? And the second is taken from the weakness and frailty of man in general, and of themselves in particular; Your remembrances are like unto ashes, your bodies to bodies of clay; will you then contend with God? will you sin against him?

Verse 11. *Shall not his excellency make you afraid, and his dread fall upon you?*

Aliqui ex Hebraeis **וַיִּנָּח**

flammam exponunt. Annon ejus ignis vos terret?

Statim ut se commoverit, turbabit vos. Vulg. Commotio ejus versabit vos. Sept.

Elevatio ejus. Reg. Complut. Elevare se idem est quod surgere & se ad puniendum accingere; cum punit Deus dicitur surgere, egredi, moveri loco suo. Adventus vel commotio domini panas ingentis hostium strepitui comparatur in Scrip. tura. Merc.

It is query'd what is here meant by *the excellency of God*. The Hebrew word is derived from a root which signifieth *to lift up*. And some of the Jewish Doctors tell us that there is a word of this form, which signifies a *fire or a flame*; and so the verb *Nasaa* signifies sometimes to burn or to consume, as well as to ascend, because the natural tendency of fire is upward, ascending as it burneth. And so they give the sense thus, *Shall not the fire of the Lord make you afraid, shall not the flame of God terrify you?* What flame, what fire? the flame of his anger here, and the fire of his wrath for ever. There is a fire in hell (whether material or metaphorical is not a question for this place.) Shall not that fire of God make sinners afraid? Are you able to dwell with those everlasting burnings, with that consuming fire? The Saints, who are acquitted from their sins, shall dwell with God, who is an everlasting burning: but wicked men, whose sins rest upon them, shall be as the stubble, suddenly burnt, though never consumed.

But I pass that. Another reads it thus, *Shall not he assuage as he moveth himself, make you afraid?* When God begins to rise, man must fall: So the words bear an allusion to Magistrates, who sitting upon the seat of Judicature, when they come to give sentence upon a guilty person, begin to stir themselves, to rise majestically, and to compose their countenances into an aspect of terror and severity. Thus when the Lord begins to stir and move himself, will not you quake? The splendor of Majesty which sits in his face, dazzles the eyes, and overcomes the strength both of men and Angels.

Others

Others conceive *Job* referring to that custom of God in those ancient times, when he appeared in a cloud, or by some visible sign, to his servants the Prophets and other holy men: When the Lord did so declare his presence, we find (as it hath been observed in former passages of this book) that the holiest men were surprized with fear, and trembling took hold of them. Hence that humble deprecation of *Job* (chap. 9. 34.) *Let not his fear terrify me.*

Alludit ad terrorem quem Deus apparet incedere solent. Bold.

Further, This stirring up may very well stand with our translation: For the Hebrew, *Nashe*, from whence this word cometh, signifies, *to lift up, to advance and extol*; as it signifies the stirring and moving of a person when he riseth or lifteth himself up, so also his dignity or excellency, a civil rising or highness, as well as a local. Dying *Jacob* calls *Reuben*, his first-born, *The excellency of dignity, and the excellency of power.* The privilege of primogeniture was very great. The first-born were as Princes among their brethren: And from this word, a *Duke* or a *Prince* is called *Nashe*, because he is lifted up or exalted above other men. Hence also, in an ill sense, the pride and sinful loftiness of man is often expressed by this word: for pride is the lifting up of our selves above our place and degree: when we in our thoughts rise beyond what we are, or are over-conceited of what we are, this is pride. Thus *Moses* and *Aaron* are falsely taxed (*Numb. 16. 4.*) *To take too much upon you, wherefore lift you up your selves above the Congregation of the Lord?* (It is this word) why do you make your selves better than others, or better than you are? Is it not the pride of your spirits? So (*Isa. 14. 13.*) the pride of the Assyrian is described, *Thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God.* He was not so mad as to think that he could literally get up into heaven, or that he could set his throne above the stars; but the phrase noteth out the excessiveness of his pride. He was the highest Monarch on earth, and it was no pride in him to think himself so: (it is not pride for a King to think himself the greatest man in his kingdom, for he is so;) but when he would be higher than man, and do that which exceedeth the state of a creature, here was pride. The excellency of God is that height, dignity, glory and majesty which he hath in himself, above and beyond all creatures. *Shall not his excellency*

est commotio est levatio vel extollentia, quare alij legunt excellentiam quae turbabitur, i. e. statim ut suam majestatem & excellentiam consuevam fecerit turbabimini. Pined.

עלה Atollere elevare, unde עול Significat ducem aut principem, eo quod sit elevatus super alios.

Make you afraid?

פער-
טורבא-
וית.
עפסיוס ויפא.
Sap. Torquetur,
vexabit.

The word signifies extream fear, such fear as doth swallow up and amaze. *Psal. 18. 4. The floods of ungodly men,* or (nearer the letter) *The floods of the sons of belial,* that is, the abundant ungodliness of those who are most ungodly, vomiting out reproaches and threatnings upon me, *made me afraid.* (*Hest. 7. 6.*) *Haman was afraid before the King and the Queen;* when *Esther* told *Ahasuerus* that he was the man that had conspired against the Jews, he was so afraid that he sunk under his fear. (*Isa. 21. 4.*) *My heart panted, fearfulness affrighted me* ('tis this word) *the night of my pleasure hath be turned into fear unto me;* such a fear siezed upon me as turned all my pleasure into dread and terror.

Put all these together, and there are four or five waies in which the sence of this question [*Shall not his excellency make you afraid?*] may be made out.

Obicit illis re-
rum adversarum
impatientiam,
semel enim
corrupti à Deo,
constantiam
quam nunc faci-
o felices ha-
bere videntur,
amittent. Aquila.

First thus, As if *Job* did suggest to his friends how suddenly they would discover their own weakness and fearfulness, though they now insulted over him, if the Lord did but appear in his excellency and greatness to them; as he had to him. As if he had said, *You think you shall never be in such a plight as I am; whomsoever God doth with you: But you shall find it otherwise, you will tell me another tale if God do but once shew himself against you, and do with you as he hath done with me: You can now trample upon me, and think I am a man of a very fearful spirit; but if the Lord do but appear in his excellency, your strength will be no more then mine. Shall not his excellency make you afraid, and his dread fall upon you, as it hath done upon me? That's one sence.*

Gravissimum
suis amicis
ominatur
supplicium. Pin.

Secondly, Some conceive that *Job* doth only threaten his friends with the terror of the Lord, and with the breakings forth of wrath which they were to expect for what they had done against him. *Shall not his excellency make you afraid?* Certainly it shall, that is, the Lords power and greatness will at last make you know that you have handled his cause ill; and done me wrong in handling it.

Thirdly, *Shall not his excellency make you afraid?* may refer to what he had said before, *You have accepted the person of God;* but should not his excellency make you afraid to do it? *Mens greatness may make you willing to flatter them* (*few flatter their equals,*

equals, and none will flatter their inferiours) because haply your dependance is upon them, and your expectations from them; but should not the excellency of God make you afraid to flatter him? The excellency of men may provoke you to favour them, and wrong inferiours to serve their turns; but such excellency as is in God should make you forbear to do so. There are two reasons why it should. First, God is above all your flattery and favour, he needs none of your help: great men may have need of lies and flatteries, but God hath none. Secondly, As the Lord is above the flatteries of men, and hath no need of them, so he doth abhor and abominate them. Many men love to be flatter'd, you can do nothing so pleasing to them as that, yea, though you flatter them with the obscuring and dimming of the true lustre of others: but the Lord likes it not. *Should not his excellency make you afraid?*

Fourthly, Others interpret the interrogation affirmatively, *Doth not his greatness make you afraid?* Yes, his greatness doth make you afraid: You fear the greatness of God so much, that you thereupon condemn me: you are so afraid that you should in any thing tax the justice of God, that you must needs tax me for unjust: As if he had said, *Is not this the reason that you deal thus with me?* Is it not because the excellency of God doth over-aw you? therefore you would rather offend on my part than on his; you would cozen, sed, propitius be sure (as you hope) not to displease God, what ever becomes of these territas, me: you think (possibly) thus with your selves, If we should speak less for God then is his due, he is so great that he can punish it; but if we speak less for Job then his due, he is but our equal, what can he do? we need not fear him. Thus many understand the words. *Judicatis secundum personam potiorum non ex prospectu cause. Id.*

Fifthly, *Shall not his excellency make you afraid?* that is, his excellency ought to make you afraid (*Malac. 1. 6.*) A son honour-eth his father, that is, a son ought to honour his father, it is the duty of a son to honour his father. So here, *Shall not his excellency make you afraid?* that is, his excellency ought to make you afraid. It is a due and an equal thing that you should be so kept in awe by the majesty of God, that you should not speak or do any thing to the prejudice of man. *Should not his excellency make you afraid?*

Observe from it,

First, *That the Lord hath an excellency in him.*

Excellency is an excess in any quality, or a gradual heightning of any thing or person above another. We are to consider this that we may give God glory, and praise him (as the Psalmist speaketh) *according to his excellent greatness.* God hath an excess of goodness in him; not an excess, as excess notes superfluity or more than needeth, but an excess, as it notes more than is in any other besides himself. The excellency of God may be considered two waies, 1. absolutely, as it is an excellency in himself, 2. comparatively, to all other excellencies. God is excellent beyond compare; they who have an excellency, have none like unto Gods, or none at all compared with God. The Prophet tells us, *that the nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance, yea, all nations are before him as nothing, and they are counted to him less than nothing, and vanity, Isa. 40. 15, 17.* Besides, the greatest excellency of man is a fading excellency (*Job 4. 11.*) *Doth not their excellency which is in them go away?* Men go away not only as they are poor and mean, but as clothed with excellency, whether outward excellency or inward excellency: the beauty of the body, learning, wisdom, eloquence, the endowments and riches of the mind, all these excellencies which are in them go away; *Journeyth it not with them* (when they make their journey out of the world?) as Mr. Broughton reads that place. And as the excellency of all men (I mean their worldly excellency) shall go away, so especially shall the excellency of the hypocrite (*Job 20. 6.*) *I thought his excellency mount up to the heavens, and his head reach unto the clouds, yet he shall perish for ever.* Hypocrites make a great shew, they have not only the profession of religion, but often the beauty of religion shining upon them, there is a verdure and flourishing greenness upon their ways to the view of man: but though their excellency mount up to the heavens, yet down they shall, they shall lye down, and everlasting contempt shall cover them.

Further, We may open the excellency of God under a three-fold notion.

1. There is an excellency of his Being.
2. Of his Attributes.
3. Of his Works.

In all these we should acquaint our selves with his excellency.

First,

First, There is an excellency in the Being of God ; creatures have a being, but not ſuch a being as God hath. For,

1. The Being of God is of himſelf. All creatures have their being of him and from him. Creatures have a derivative being ; God is *Original Being, the firſt Being*. Here is the excellency of his Being. It is ſaid (*Habak. 1. 7.*) of the *Chaldeans*, *that their judgement and their dignity, or (it is the word of the text) their excellency ſhall proceed of themſelves.* But is any man the fountain of his own happineſs, excellency or greatness ? Can it be ſaid of any in the world that his excellency ſhall proceed of himſelf ? In one reſpect the excellency of ſome doth : In another reſpect it doth not, it cannot. It cannot be ſaid of any excellency in creatures, ſtrictly, that it proceedeth from themſelves, all comes from God. But take a creature in its reference to any, or all other creatures, and ſo the excellency of ſome proceedeth from themſelves, and not from other creatures. Such is the meaning of that place, *Their judgement and their excellency ſhall proceed of themſelves*, that is, they ſhall not depend upon other perſons or nations, they ſhall not impe out their wings with other men's feathers, nor ſhall they ſhine with a borrowed glory. Some Kingdoms do glorious things, but their glory proceeds from neighbouring aſſiſtances. But the *Chaldean* needed not to confederate with any. Thus a creatures excellency may proceed from himſelf; not from other creatures, but all proceeds from God : and the excellency only of God in his Being is from himſelf alone, independent upon the creature.

2. *God's Being is to himſelf as well as from himſelf*; and thus alſo he excelleth man, whoſe being is not to himſelf, but to another; for all things are and were created unto God. No creature was made to it ſelf. The dignity of God is to himſelf alone: he indeed doth give out himſelf voluntarily, and ſo his Being is for the good of others, but he hath this prerogative, to keep all his Being to himſelf: As it is the holineſs of man to put forth his being for God; ſo it is the holineſs of God that his Being is for himſelf; he doth and may do all things for his own glory, as man ought to do all for the glory of God.

3. *God's Being is an unchangeable Being*: Man is in motion every day, either in his increaſe, or in his decreaſe; he is either growing, or he is decaying; both in his natural and civil ſtate. Man hath no conſtancy; while he is he continueth not what he

was. Man is a shadow, he is alwayes turning, but with God there is no variableness nor shadow of turning. The Psalmist sets out this opposition between God and creatures (Psal. 106. 26, 27.) *They shall perish, but thou shalt endure, yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment, as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed, but thou Lord art the same, and thy years shall have no end.*

4. Man's being in this life, it is not only changeable, but determinable. God is an eternal Being, he is from everlasting to everlasting. We are short-breathed, short-lived creatures, if we number three or four score years, we are counted wondrous old; and when we have numbered all our years they are no number at all to the years of God.

5. Man's being is but a particular being: the Being of God is an universal Being; he is a Being in all things, and yet not included in any, a Being without all things, and yet not excluded from any.

6. Man's being is such as man may comprehend; one man can measure another. No man hath any such excellency in him, but another may be found to take the length, and breadth, and depth of it, even all its dimensions. But God's Being is an incomprehensible Being, there is no measuring, either of his nature, of his counsels, or of his ways.

7. The Being of God is an absolute perfect Being. Man's being is respective and imperfect; though it be perfect in its kind, as such a creature, yet it is not perfect in all kinds: Somewhat may be taken from man and added to him, and he a man still; but God is so perfect that nothing can be added to or taken from him, all things are laid up in him: He is the sum and comprehension of all those excellencies which are scattered in the creature, and he infinitely excels them all.

The result of all these is excellency. God hath not only a being as we have, but an excellency, a glory in his Being above all other beings: the being of the creature is no being, we are but *Non entia* compared with God. *I am that I am*, is his stile: God is the highest Entity, the Entity of all Entities.

Secondly, the excellency of God appears through all his Attributes.

Man is wise. There are many wise men in the world: But is man wise as God? The wisdom of man is foolishness to God, and

and the fooliſhneſs of God is wiſer than men.

Man hath knowledge, but doth man know as God? Man knoweth not as God knoweth, if we conſider either the matter or manner of knowledge. Man knoweth but ſome parts and pieces of things; God knoweth all things: Man knoweth but in part, God knoweth fully: Man knoweth one thing by another, he muſt beat out his way by argument, and know by demonstration, deſcending ſometimes from the cauſe to the effect, aſcending at other times from the effect to the cauſe: But God knoweth all things in themſelves. He knows by immediate intuition: He ſeeth cauſes in themſelves, not by their effects, and he ſeeth the effects in themſelves and not from their cauſes.

Man is juſt. There are juſt men: But is any man juſt as God? Oh the exactneſs of the juſtice of God! There is no error in his judgment, he will give to every man according to his work. Where's the man that gives to any man according to his works?

Man is merciful: but is he merciful as God? Hath man ſuch a ſtock of mercy as he? Hath man mercy for ever? Hath man multitudes of mercies? Mans mercies are cruelties compared with the mercies of God.

Man is patient: but is he patient as God? if God had no more patience than man, or then all men and Angels too, his patience would be ſpent out in one day, it would not laſt one hour, amongſt ſo many ſinnings and provocations, among ſinnings after ſo many warnings.

Man hath love: but doth he love as God loveth? ſo freely? ſo fully? ſo conſtantly? ſo without ends and deſigns upon thoſe he loves? Our love is hatred compared with the love of God.

What ſhould I ſay of the power, of the holineſs, of the faithfullneſs, of the bounty of God? What of every thing that is attributed unto God? he is ſo excellent in every one, that he is all excellency.

Thirdly, There is an excellency in the works of God, what God is in Being, the ſame he is in working. He is (*Job. 28. 29.*) wonderful in counſel, and excellent in working. Excellent in working, becauſe excellent in being. *Exod. 15. 7.* In the greatneſs of his excellency thou haſt overthrown them: that roſe up againſt thee. (*Deut. 33. 26.*) There is none like the God of Jeſurun (*that*

(that is, the God of Israel) *who rideth upon the heaven to thy help, and in his excellency on the skie?* God is said to ride to the help of his people, because he helps them speedily; and he rideth in his excellency, that he may shew his state and magnificence when he comes to help them. When God works in his excellency, we shall see the excellencies of God imprinted upon his works. *Hast thou an arm like God? saith Elihu to Job, or canst thou thunder with a voice like him? Canst thou teach like God?* (saith he also) We may say to the worker, *Canst thou work like God?* to the teacher, *Canst thou teach like God?* to the souldier, *Canst thou fight like God?* Now, as there is an excellency in the Being, Attributes and Works of God, so this his excellency should strongly affect and over-aw our hearts: *Should not his excellency make you afraid?*

Hence Observe,

The excellency of God should keep men in a holy compoſure of spirit, in a holy care to please him, in a holy fear of offending him.

What? before the excellency of God, before a God so excellent in Being, so excellent in the manner of his Being, so excellent in working, and we walk loosely and carelessly? Let this excellency of his make us afraid. *The Lord most high is terrible,* (Psal. 47. 2.) he is terrible because so high. The Preacher in his description of old men, saith, *They shall be afraid of that which is high* (Eccles. 12. 5.) Old age loves to keep upon even ground, for fear of falling: But the youngest and stoutest of men, they who are most ambitious of clambing unto high places, have cause to be afraid of the most high God, and when he discovers his highness they will be afraid. Men never fear that which is but equal to them, and until they conceive an excellency in God, they never fear him. David prayeth that God would be pleased to shew his excellency, his greatness and his highness to his enemies (Psal. 8. 6.) *Arise, O Lord, in thine anger, lift up thy self because of the rage of mine enemies, for their jugs return thou on high.* Why would he have God to lift up himself, and to return on high? The Lord is ever on high? The meaning is, Do thou declare thy self to be on high, let thy excellency appear above all. Why? What will be the effect of this? So (saith he) *shall the congregation of the people compass thee about: that is, they shall crouch and fall down before thee when thou appearest in thy highness.* When Christ appeared in his highness, though but as a

Lamb,

Lamb, upon his throne, all the congregation did compaſs him about, terror and aſtoniſhment ſurprized them all: The kings of the earth, and the chief captains, called to the mountains and rocks to fall on them, to hide them from the face of him that ſat on the throne, *Rev. 6. 16.*

The *Chaldee Paraphraſt* głoſſeth this text of *Job*, *Shall ye not be afraid when the Lord is lifted up, or ſet upon his throne of judgment?* They who now ſlight the Lord, ſhall then tremble at the Lord, and before the preſence of his Majeſty, when he ariſeth to ſhake terribly the earth.

Laſtly, Forasmuch as *Job* having charged his friends with accepting the perſon of God, and with ſpeaking falſly in favour of him, ſubjoins in this verſe, *Shall not his excellency make you afraid?* Obſerve,

That all our undue ſpeakings and doings for, or in the cauſe of God, ariſe from our undue apprehenſions of God.

We conceive of God after the rate and proportion of a man, and meaſure him by our own ſpan. Hence it is that many inſtead of adoring and fearing God, do indeed but play with him, and take the liberty of an ungovern'd boldneſs, both concerning his counſels and his judgements. What becomes of the excellency of God, when he is drawn down to the reaſon, and narrow'd, or rather nothing'd into the capacities of a creature? We never abaſe our ſelves as we ought, nor keep our diſtance till we are rapt into the meditation of his divine excellencies and perfections. When *David* puts thoſe humbling, emptying queſtions (*Pſal. 8. 4.*) *What is man that thou art mindful of him? and the ſon of man that thou viſiteſt him?* When he (I ſay) puts theſe queſtions, ſee where his heart was (*verſ. 9.*) *O Lord our God, how excellent is thy name in all the earth!* When he thought of the excellency of Gods name, he did not think himſelf worth the naming, *What is man?* while he thought who God was, he did not think himſelf worthy of one of Gods thoughts, *What is man that thou art mindful of him?* The Angels cover their faces before God, they adore, but they cannot bear his glory. They that know God, fear him, and they who know him moſt (ſo do Angels) fear him moſt. The more excellent any creature is, the more he fears the excellency of the Creator. *Shall not his excellency make you afraid?*

And his dread fall upon you ?

His dread] The words bear the same sence with the former, therefore I shall not stay upon them. *His dread* : The Original imports a fear rising from some outward cause. Divine fear is caused three ways ; First, by the rule or precept of the law. Secondly, By the penalty or threatnings of the law. Thirdly, By those judgments which are inflicted for the transgression of the law. We may understand the text of fear, by all these. *Shall not his dread*, the dread of the precept, which is so holy : the dread of the threatening, which is so terrible : the dread of the judgments of God, which are so exemplary, *fall upon you ?*

Fall upon you ?

The dread of God is from above, as lodged on high, and so comes down (as it were) with an advantage upon transgressors (*Rev. 11. 11.*) It is said that when ten parts of the city fell, *fear fell upon the rest*. Fear fell upon them, as a stone from an high tower, and crushed their spirits. The Apostle speaks this notion, *Rom. 1. 18.* *The wrath of God is revealed from heaven.* As if heaven did open to let his wrath down, or to discharge it like a thunderbolt upon unrighteous men. The Spaniards have a proverb (which an interpreter remembreth upon this place) *God hath the hill and the stones*, which is as much as to say, *God hath the upper ground of all creatures*, and his wrath falls upon them as stones from an high place. We may contend with angry men upon even ground, creature with creature, but God hath the upper ground of all creatures, his wrath falls upon us. He hath the hill, yea, he hath the wind and the sun of us, he hath all advantages on his side, there is no standing out against him.

Hence Note,

First, *God is to be dreaded.*

To be dreaded in the justice of his law, in the severity of his threatening, in the greatness of his judgements ; from each of these dread falls like a mighty millstone upon the heads of unbelievers and obdurate sinners. Justice appears with open face in the law, threatnings lie virtually in the law : judgements are formally in the threatnings, and threatnings are visibly in judgements. God is to be dreaded, when we hear the rule of the law ; he is to be feared more, when we hear the threatnings of the law ;

he

Semper ex sublimi loco punire adversus mortales Deus dicitur ; quod in Hispanorum proverbio est : Ipsius & mons & lapides sunt Pined.

he is to be feared most, when we hear or see those threatnings executed in judgements, *The man* (saith *Moses*, Deut. 17, 12, 13.) *that doth presumptuously* (by sinning against the rule of the law) *shall dye* (by suffering the penalty of the law) *and all the people shall bear and fear, and do no more presumptuously.*

Secondly, Observe,

The dread of God shall certainly fall upon sinners.

As it noeth a duty, that we should dread God, so an event that such as continue in sin, the dread of God will fall upon them. The dread of God will surely take hold of sinners, unless they get Christ to be their Saviour: No fence against the dread of God but Christ: For as one Scripture saith, *The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all unrighteousness*: So, another saith, *He is Jesus that delivereth us from the wrath to come*. There is no wrath escaping, but by a Mediator.

Verse 12. *Your remembrances are like unto ashes, and your bodies of clay.*

This verse is an Antithesis to the words before. *Job* having perswaded his friends to silence, and to desist their unfriendly carriage towards him, by an argument taken from the excellency of God; now moveth them by an argument from their own weakness and infirmity; *Shall not his excellency make you afraid? and his dread fall upon you?* vers. 11. There he tells them who God is, and that they ought to stand in awe of him. Here in this 12th he tells them what they are, and how they ought to be abased in the sense of their own frailty; *Your remembrances are like unto ashes, your bodies to bodies of clay. Hold your peace, &c.* Will you, who are clay and ashes, stand it out against his excellency?

Your remembrances are like unto ashes.

The letter of the Hebrew is, *Your remembrances are parables of ashes, or have the similitude and likeness of ashes in them.*

There is much variety of opinion about the meaning of those words. Some expound them as a threatening against his friends: *Your remembrances are like unto ashes*, that is, your remembrances shall be brought to ashes, or, you shall be made like unto ashes. To bring one to ashes, is an effect of wrath, the fire of

Job 13
Memoria ve-
stra parabola
cineris. Mon.
Infer cineris.
Pagn.

Gods wrath quickly consumes man to ashes. Ashes are a sign and a monument of extreamest anger. So the Apostle Peter speaks of *Sodom and Gomorrah*, in his second Epistle, chap. 2. 6. Where proposing Gods judgement upon those cities, he saith, And turning the cities of *Sodom and Gomorrah* into ashes, condemned them with an overthrow, making them an ensample unto those that after should live ungodly. And the Apostle Jude describing the destruction of the same cities, saith, They suffered the vengeance of eternal fire: they were turned into ashes for ever: For as if that fire burned, or were not quenched unto this day; he calls it an *eternal fire*: or the reason may be, because they went from one fire to another, from the fire which God rained down from heaven, to the fire which he had prepared for the ungodly in hell: Historians speak of the marks of this vengeance of God upon *Sodom and Gomorrah* as still remaining. Some call that place *The Region of ashes*. And *Josephus* reports it as the tradition of those times, that the apples of *Sodom* were fair and pleasant to the eye, as if fit to be eaten, but as soon as they were touched, they turned to ashes. Some Interpreters (I say) conceive *Job* hinting that judgement of God upon *Sodom and Gomorrah*, thereby admonishing his friends, that as God turned those cities into ashes, so if they should provoke his excellency, he could quickly deal with them, and make them an everlasting argument of his displeasure. Though I stay not upon this Exposition.

Invenitur regio cineris, Paul. Orosius. l. 1. c. 5. Quis colore quidem sunt edulibus similes carpentium, verum manibus in fumum dissolvuntur & cinerem; Joseph. de bello Judaic. l. 5. c. 5.

Yet because it contains a general truth, take one Note from it.

That, if God be provoked he can soon turn all into ashes, weaken the strength, and blast the beauty of man.

As the Lord speaks to *Abimelech*, Gen. 20. 3. Thou art but a dead man, because of the woman which thou hast taken, for she is a mans wife: As if he should say, I can quickly destroy thee, turn thee into the grave, tumble thee into the earth, though thou art a king, and a great one. The Roman History speaks of *Cæsar*, that when *Metellus* the Tribune controlled his orders about the publique Treasure; *Be quiet* (saith he) *lest I lay thee dead in the place*; yet correcting himself, he added, *Young man, it is harder for me to speak it, than to do it*; which he spake to mollifie the sharpness of his speech, as not proceeding from his nature, but his passion, and as being grieved at the harshness of his own language. If the

the kings and potentates of the earth speak at such a rate, that they can easier destroy men, then say they will destroy, how much more may God? This is really true of him who is the only Potentate, the Lord of heaven and earth, that it is as easie for him to destroy persons and nations, and to make their remembrance to be as ashes, as it is for him to say he will.

Some others speak higher^a, and interpret this text, as they say probably, of eternal fire: as if Job had threatned his friends with damnation. *Shall not his excellency make you afraid? Your remembrances are like unto ashes*, you shall be turned into hell, and sent to everlasting destruction. But I approve this less then the former. Job was displeased with his friends for their opinions concerning him: yet doubtless he had a better opinion of them then to judge them under such a displeasure of God.

Thirdly, *Your remembrances* is expounded actively thus, *the things which you remember^b*, the reasonings,* objections and records which you have brought out of the storehouse of your memories against me, and would have remembred, are like unto ashes, utterly extinct and easily blown away. The word Remembrance, is used in that sence (*Exod. 17. 14.*) Where Moses is commanded to write a memorial against Amalek, that is, to record somewhat as a remembrance against them: Records; and the officer that keeps records, are both expressed by this word, because they preserve the remembrances of what is past.

Though this hath a fair sence, yet it seemeth not to be so clear to the connection of these words, therefore I rather insit upon a fourth interpretation^c, taking this remembrance more generally for any thing which is memorable in man: as riches, dignity, power, credit, learning, wisdom. As if Job had said, *These things by which you hope to be remembred, and become famous in the world, are but ashes*; that is, mean, and of no consistence. (*Prov. 10. 7.*) *The memory of the just is blessed, but the name of the wicked shall rot.* The memory, that is, when persons living in after ages shall remember the just, they will bless them and highly esteem them, but the name and credit of wicked men shall consume as a rotten thing to nothing.

Taking their remembrance for that which was most memorable in them, we may observe,

That the best things, those things which are most remarkable

a *Se idem ex-
trimum Gebra-
na supplicium
civis nomine
proponitur, et
significat mor-
tem ignobilem.
Pined.*

b *Sententiam
bane, & ex ci-
nere dustan si-
militudinem ad
ipsas responsio-
nes & argu-
menta amicorum
refert; q. d. re-
sponsiones vi-
stra pereunt &
collabuntur. Var.
usade*

מזכיר
Marzchir di-
cebatur illi
qui erant a
commentariis,
quique negotia
scriptis manda-
bant. Liber Zi-
cheinoth i. e.
memoriarum.

Est. 6. 1.
c *At cinis est
quicquid tan-
dem targetis a-
mici. Met. Pocr.
Memoria ve-
stra i. e. quic-
quid in vobis
memorable est,
ut opes, digni-
tas, fama, splen-
dor & vita, ni-
hil aliud est
quam cinis, &
omnia in cinem
& nihilum re-
digenda ut re-
na, &c. Me-
rc.*

and memorable in man, are but vain, and subject to a sudden decay.

What men lay by, and esteem as a monument to posterity, or as a memorial to preserve their names to all generations; how often is it scattered like ashes in the air, all spilt like water upon the ground, which cannot be gathered up? Men for their remembrance use to set up the most lasting materials; pillars of marble, or Pyramids of stone. It is said of *Abfalom*, that he in his lifetime had taken and reared up for himself a pillar, and so called it after his own name, because he had no son to keep his name in remembrance: Yet that remembrance of his proved like ashes, and so will all that, whatsoever it is, which vain men frame or fancy to themselves to make them memorable and renowned among posterity or succeeding ages. Your remembrances are like unto ashes; which will receive a clearer evidence when I have a little opened the later clause of this verse.

21 Proprie fig.

Superiorem partem & prominentem, unde vox latina gibbus credenda est fluxisse. Rab. Mardoc.

Gabbai est suggestum eminentis lapidibus stratum.

Vult quicquid in ipso potissimum eminent esse tumulum luti. Merl. Et tumulus luti altiora vestra, Iun.

Cognata voce fastus & arrogantia, vocatur in Scriptura.

Ghobab גבוב unde a Kimethi exponitur omnis altitudo & eminentia.

And your bodies to bodies of clay.

That is, As ashes are a fit parable or similitude to shadow out all the permanency or excellency of your remembrances, so a body, or a heap of clay, is a sufficient parable or similitude of all the value and dignity of your bodies.

Your bodies.

The word (*Gab*) which we translate *body*, signifies any thing which is *high, lifted up and eminent*, or the upper and superior part of any thing. It is said (*Joh. 19. 13.*) that *Pilate* sat down in the judgement-seat, in a place that is called in the Hebrew *Gabbatha*. Seats of judgment are erected and set up in eminent places, that so the Judge may be in the peoples view. According to which acceptation of the word, the meaning rises thus; That which is highest in you, your greatest elevations, are like to a lump of clay. And so the opposition stands fair between this and the former verse; there *Job* tells his friends, that the excellency of God may justly make them afraid. But what is your excellency? As your remembrances, or whatsoever is most memorable in you, are like unto ashes; so all your excellencies, compared with the excellency of God, are but like a clod of clay.

Hence Observe,

That which is most high and excellent in man, compared with
the

the excellency of God, is but like to dirt or clay.

All the dignities and eminencies of man are but fit to be swept to the dunghill, when God is named. When *Abraham*, a prince, and a great one too, stood before the Lord, he hath no valuation for himself, but by *dust and ashes*, Gen. 18. 27. We cannot but have low thoughts of our selves (what worldly and carnal heights so ever we are in) when we truly remember the high God. There are three things upon which many men raise themselves very high, even to think themselves like the most High, as it is said of *Lucifer*. First, Their riches; Riches are not only a strong, but a high tower; this eminency is most like to clay, yea, it is an eminency in clay, or *thick clay*, as the Prophet speaketh (*Hab. 2.*) Secondly, Men think themselves very high if they get upon the pinnacle of honour; from this height they look down upon, and despise all as underlings; yet this is but like clay too; how often have the greatest earthly honours been laid in the dust? Thirdly, Others are lifted up with their natural wisdom, their learning, parts and gifts. They who condemn riches and honour, are yet puffed up with a conceit of their inward endowments: yet as God will destroy all the wisdom of this world, so the wisdom of the best men in the world is foolishness compared to God. If some one creature hath such an excelling excellency, that other excellent creatures (as the stars to the sun) have no excellency in the presence of it, how much more are all created excellencies swallowed up at the thought of that excellency which is in God? must not all go for clay and ashes, when we have once mentioned him?

Further, The word signifies also the bosses of a buckler (*Job 15. 27.*) because bosses are the most eminent part of a buckler, being set out for the ornament of it. Thus some translate it here, *The bosses of your bucklers*, or, *your bucklers are like bucklers of fragilia*. But what was the buckler of *Job's* friends? their buckler was their arguments and their reasons, which they urged against *Job*. Arguments are amongst Disputants, their weapons, their sword and buckler. The third interpretation of the former in me tanquam clause, and this, comply fairly, *Your remembrances*, that is, the things you have remembered to or against me, are like unto ashes, and *Your bucklers*, that is, your arguments and objections are like unto clay, weak and poor, however you think they are strong, impregnable and unanswerable. The Apostle useth a similitude

Quicquid in vobis est maxime memorabile & altum si cum Deo comparatur nihil est. Jun. Eminentia vestra ad quicquid quiliatum & laui cumulos proiciantur. Bold.

Gab est extantia clypei. Umbones vestri, i. e. argumenta vestra sunt. Ista qua vos ut diligenter observata commemoratis, & certa quadam axiomata detentis, non sunt solidiora quam cinis, & lutum.

which Bez.

which may give some light to this (1 Cor. 3. 12.) where he compares sound doctrine to gold, silver, precious stones, but corrupt doctrine, to wood, hay, stubble.

Et corpora utraque corporibus luteis, i. e. acervis luteis. Rediguntur in lutum et cerices vestri. Vulg.

Thirdly, We translate. *Your bodies*, so the word signifies by a Tropè, because the body of man stands upright, and is lifted up: Man goeth not groveling upon or toward the ground, as a beast goeth, but he hath no erect figure and form, therefore his body is called *Gab*, that is, *lifted*, or *raised up*. Others render it by a part of the body, the *back*, or the *neck*: So the Vulgar, *Your necks* which are lifted up, shall be brought down to the clay. But I rather keep to our rendering of the word, by the whole body, then by a part or member of it; As if Job had said, *Your bodies*, which in regard of the figure and frame of them are lifted up, as if they did scorn the earth, are yet but pieces of earth and clods of clay; you trample upon earth and clay, as things below you, yet you are no better than the things you trample upon, even earth and clay: and so them these bodies of yours must shortly be reduced and resolved into as their first principles, though now you look big upon me, and carry it high.

Hence Observe,

First, *The body of man, how strong, how beautiful soever, is but a piece of earth and clay.*

First, It is clay, in regard of the baseness and meanness of it; earth is the meanest of the elements, the lowest and worst of all, so is the body the meanest part of man.

Secondly; It is clay, in regard of the brittleness of it, it breaks quickly like a Potters vessel.

But it may be said, why doth Job speak thus to his friends? Why doth he tell them that their bodies are bodies of clay? Did not they know that before? Need any man be told that his body is formed out of the earth, and that it turneth to the earth again? Especially, needed these friends of Job, who were men of such knowledge and wisdom, yea, of holiness too, needed they to be taught that their bodies were bodies of clay?

I answer, We may know many things which we are not affected with. There is a two-fold knowledge of things: There is a knowing of things in the notion, or a speculative knowledge, and there is a knowing of things in the application, or a practical knowledge of them. Doubtless they knew this speculatively, but Job thought they did not know it practically. They would never

never (as he supposed) have been so stiff towards him if they had remembered that themselves were clay. A man hath some knowledge wherein he differeth little from a beast, which hath no knowledge. The Prophet teacheth this for truth (*Jer. 10. 14.*) *Every man is brutish in his knowledge.* A strange speech; it might rather be said, that *every man is brutish in his ignorance*; though a beast cannot properly be called ignorant, yet a beast hath no knowledge: How is it then that he saith, every man is brutish in his knowledge? It is because, though every man knows that which a beast cannot, yet he doth not make that improvement of it which a man (especially which a Saint) should and might. This is a kind of brutishness in knowledge: And when he saith, *Every man is brutish in his knowledge*; it is a very large word, for are godly men brutish in their knowledge? surely no; then every man here, is every wicked man, and all such are brutish in their knowledge. Though a wicked man knoweth that his body is a body of clay, though he knoweth there is a God, and a Christ; and if you speak to him of these things, he will say, *he knows them as well as you*, yet he is brutish in the knowledge he hath of them all. Every wicked man is so; yea, in every thing he knoweth and doth, he is brutish. I conceive also that place of the Prophet may take in godly men, in a mitigated sence, even they are brutish in their knowledge; Why? because they do not improve their knowledge to that height which they might, they do not that good, nor raise that glory to God by their knowledge, which the talents they are entrusted with, call for. The Apostle Jude concludes of wicked men, *That which they know naturally, in that like brute beasts they corrupt themselves*: and I may say, what the Saints know spiritually, if they corrupt themselves, or are corrupted in any of that knowledge, so far they know but like brute beasts: Therefore though this is a common lesson, yet it is but need to press it upon all, as Job here doth: *It is not without cause that men are told that their bodies are bodies of clay. It is no easie matter to know our selves in those things which are easily known.* It is a good determination which one hath made concerning knowledge: First, *He that knoweth not what he should, is a beast among men.* Secondly, *He that knoweth no more then needs must, is a man among beasts.* Thirdly, *He that knoweth all that he may know, is a God among men*: The third must be taken thus: He that knoweth all objects knowable

knowable within the compass of man; and he that beareth out the knowledge of those objects to the full, making the highest improvement of them, this man is as a God amongst men: and he may well be called so, seeing there are very few who ever arrived to this height about any one object of knowledge, and (I believe) never any one attained it in reference unto all.

Now while we find *Job* teaching this plain piece of knowledge, that *our bodies are bodies of clay*, it teacheth us three Lessons,

First, *That man is a proud piece of flesh, and therefore hath need to be told that he is but clay.*

Secondly, *That pride ariseth either from ignorance, or forgetfulness of what we are.*

David desired the Lord to teach him how frail he was, *Psal.* 39. Though *David* was a very holy and a knowing man, yet he knew not that plain point. Some think it so common a truth that no man needs to be taught that *man is mortal*. One great reason why immortality is so little looked after, is because our mortality is so little looked into. We know little either of the power of God, or of the weakness of man; and many who have some knowledge of these cannot be said to make any use of them: their knowledge lies mouldring by the walls, they do not act the things they know; such knowledge leaveth a man in a worse condition than ignorance doth. Besides, a man that forgets what he is, will be as proud as he that knows not what he is: *Forgetfulness is a temporary ignorance*; how much soever any man knows, yet he can use no more than he remembers, and 'tis seldom that he useth all that.

Thirdly, *The meanest things in the world are parables, or similitudes, fit to set forth what the outward state of man is.*

What the work of God is upon the soul, is not before us now. That's precious matter indeed, both for matter and form, there are engravings and stamps upon the soul of a glorious excellency: But (I say) take man in his outside, and then the meanest and poorest things in the world are parables of man, *our bodies are like bodies of clay*. The Apostle *Peter* calleth his body an *earthly tabernacle* (2 Pet. 1. 13.) *I know I must shortly lay down my earthly tabernacle*: The body is a tabernacle, and that is an uncertain dwelling, it is not built as an house that hath foundations. And if you call it an house, yet it is not a house of marble, but of clay,

clay, Job. 4. 19. Other Scriptures call it, *an earthen veſſel* (2 Cor. 4. 7.) *We have this treaſure* (ſaith the Apoſtle, but it is) *in earthen veſſels*. They had the treaſure of all Goſpel truths, of Goſpel graces and of Goſpel gifts; theſe precious treaſures they carried about with them, but all in earthen veſſels: Yea, the body of man is not only called earthen, but the whole man is called earth; and as if he could never be called earth enough, he is called earth three times over in one verſe (Job. 22. 29.) *O earth, earth, earth, hear the word of the Lord*: Which words, though they may well, and (poſſibly) moſt properly in that place be taken as an appeal (uſual in Scripture) to the whole body of the earth, yet they have a clear truth, as applied to the bodies of men made of earth; all men on earth have earthen bodies, and moſt men have earthen minds too, and ſo very earth, or earth, earth, earth, nothing but earth. It is reported in the French Hiſtory, that when an old Counſellor would needs depart the Court, and retire himſelf to a private life, the king deſired him to leave him his advice in ſome general rules, what to do in the government of the kingdom; at which motion he took a fair paper, and wrote upon the top of the leaf, *moderation*, and in the middle of the leaf *moderation*, and at the bottom of the leaf, *moderation*: His meaning was, as if he had ſaid to that King, Sir, *if you would keep your kingdom quiet, carry the reins of your government moderately quite through*. So here, if the queſtion ſhould be, what is man? and a blank paper were preſented me to ſet down Job's opinion of him, I muſt write on the top of the leaf, *earth*, in the middle, *earth*, at the bottom, *earth*: *His remembrances are like unto aſhes, and his body is a body of clay*.

Job having taken his friends down by theſe arguments, and cooled their ſpirits, thinks now they may be dealt withall; and therefore concludes,

Verſe 13. *Hold your peace, let me alone that I may ſpeak, and let come on me what will.*

From the connection of theſe words, we may Obſerve,
That a man when he is humbled, is in a good temper to hear counſel.

Your bodies are bodies of clay, now, *Let me alone, hold your peace that I may ſpeak*; If you attend your own condition, you will the better attend my counſel. *Pride of heart ſtoppeth the ear.*

H h h

They

They who have high thoughts of themselves, think meanly of what is said unto them by others. Were men low in their own eyes, they would embrace every advice that hath truth and holiness in it.

At the 5th verse *Job* said, *O that you would altogether hold your peace*; here he turns his wish into a charge,

Hold your peace, let me alone that I may speak.

But doth *Job*, as many, who because they love to hear themselves speak, desire others to hold their peace? Doth *Job* speak thus because he would have all the talk? Or because he was resolved to have the last word?

Job's modesty and humbleness of mind may acquit him from such imputations. This his forwardness to speak, and opportunity for audience, did both arise, not from his own desire to speak, but from a willingness to rectifie what his friends had spoken amiss, and to set himself right in their opinions; or he advises them to hold their peace, lest by speaking as they had done they should lose their peace. Many break not only the outward peace of others, but the inward peace of their own souls, because they cannot (in this sence) hold their peace. There might be much more peace than there is, in our hearts, in our houses, in the common-wealth, in the Church, if we could teach our tongues to hold their peace, when it is unreasonable to speak. There is a time to be silent, and a time to speak; could we time our tongues well, how well might we time our actions! because our words are so unruly, therefore our wayes are so uneven. *Job* saw it was time for his friends to hold their peace, and time for him to speak. Therefore he saith, *Hold your peace, let me alone that I may speak.*

Why doth *Job* add, *Let come on me what will*? A strange kind of speech. Doth it become a man to be so resolute, or rather (as the words at first view import) so desperate? Is not here the voice of desperation? Would any wise man speak so?

Let come on me what will.

Taceat paulisper ut loquar
quodcumq; mihi
mens suggererit.
Vulg.

The Vulgar translateth this part of the sence thus, *Hold your peace that I may speak whatsoever my mind suggesteth to me*; or, *Hold your peace, let me speak whatsoever comes into my mind*; as if

if *Job* would ſpeak any thing that came next, or floated uppermoſt in his phancy; ſo ſome gloſs the interpretation of the Vulgar, which is indeed diſhonourable to ſuppoſe of him: Shall we think that he cared not how he ſpake, who had ſo often reproved his friends for ſpeaking careleſſly? Would he run headlong into that error which he had ſo ſeverely reprehended?

Loquar quicquid in buccam venerit.

Let come upon me what will.

The word [*Let come*] ſignifies to paſs over, or paſs upon; ſo then, *I will ſpeak, let what will paſs upon me*, is no more but this, let what cenſure ſoever paſs upon me; cenſure me how you will, I will ſpeak; or, I will ſpeak how ever you take it.

Loquar & tranſſear ſuper me quidvis.

Or, It may refer to the determination of God; I will ſpeak and ſtand to his ſentence, let him paſs what judgement he pleaſeth concerning me, I am reſolved to maintain my cauſe: as we ſay in our language, when we are reſolved to do a thing, *Fall back, or fall edge, I will do it.*

Varab.

Quocumque, res ſit caſura pro me loquar. Bez. Loquar mea proculio quicquid tandem mihi ſit eventurum.

Job in theſe words removeth a ſecond pretence which his friends made for what they had ſpoken.

Fiſt, They ſaid, They did all for the glory of God, and to maintain his juſtice. As to that, he told them roundly before, that God needed none of their patronage, *Will you ſpeak wickedly for God? will you talk deceitfully for him?* He deſires not your lies to defend and uphold his cauſe.

There was a ſecond thing which his friends held forth as a ground of their counſels, and that was the tender care and compaſſion which they had of *Job* himſelf, leſt going on thus complaining, yea, as they thought, thus blaſpheming, the Lord ſhould bring ſomewhat worſe, then ever yet he had brought, upon him.

As *Job* therefore takes off the former pretence before, ſo he takes off this here: As if he had ſaid, *You ſeem to be very tender of me, leſt God ſhould lay ſome further judgement upon me for maintaining my integrity, but I will ſpeak, come of it what will, at my peril be it, I will bear all the blame my ſelf, take you no care, have you but patience to hear me ſpeak, let all the trouble that may enſue be on my ſcore, I will be accountable to God for it.* 'Tis true, *Job* being provoked ſpake thus with ſome heat, and was deſirous rather to caſt himſelf wholly upon God then to hear his friends any longer.

Ego de miſſo rationem reddam Deo, & quicquam, Interim non ſine ſtomacho hoc dicit, ſed irritus eſt.

Hence Observe,

First, *An upright heart is very resolute; I will speak, and let come to me what will.*

There is nothing that can make a man afraid, who is not afraid of himself. *The righteous is bold as a lion.* As one of the ancient Myrtyrs spake, when his persecuters terrified him with threatenings, *There is nothing* (saith he) *of things visible, nothing of things invisible that I fear, I will stand to my profession of the name of Christ, and contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the Saints, let come on't what will.* It is said of *Luther*, when he was to go to the meeting at *Worms*, that being informed by his friends that he had many enemies lying in wait to ruine him, *Tell me not of it* (saith he) *for I will go though there were as many devils to assault me as there are tiles upon the houses.* Thus the Apostle *Paul* (Act. 21. 10.) when some did weep and mourn over him, because it was prophecied that he should be bound at *Jerusalem*: *Agabus* had bound himself with *Pauls* girdle, and said, *So shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man that oweth this girdle, and thereupon they entreated him to forbear going up; Forbear?* (saith he) *No, I will go to Jerusalem, I am ready, not to be bound only at Jerusalem, but to die there for the Name of the Lord Jesus: I'll put it to a venture.* When once *Hesters* heart was set upon it to engage for the deliverance of the Jews, she would on, *I will go in to the King, which is not according to the law* (I know I run an hazard) *and if I perish, I perish*: I am upon a good ground, and in a good cause, though I fail in some outward formalities, yet I will venture. Thus will an upright heart speak, thus will an upright heart do: An upright heart will both speak and do, let come on it what will; let the world be pleased or displeased, let the world frown or smile, let the world be angry or embrace. And it is the same phrase in the Hebrew which we have (2 Sam. 18. 23.) when *Abimaaz* would go and carry the tidings of *Absaloms* death unto *David* (*Joab* had sent *Cushi* with the message before, yet *Abimaaz* would needs run after him) *Let me, I pray thee* (saith he to *Joab*) *run after Cushi: And Joab said, wherefore wilt thou run, my son; seeing thou hast no tidings ready? But howsoever* (said he) *let me run; I have a mind to carry this message howsoever, that is, let come on me what will.* Even so saith the soul in its uprightness and resolvedness upon the waies of God, though checkt with why would you do so?

Howsoever

וְיָחִי
Et sit quicquid.

Howsoever let me go, though you think it is to no purpose, yet let me go on: Let come of it what will, I resign the issue wholly to God.

Secondly, When *Job* speaks thus, *Let come on it what will*, you must know he had very good ground for what he spake, he knew whom he trusted, and trust him he would though he slew him, as we shall hear him professing with his next breath.

Hence Note,

A: upright heart never feareth any hurt from God.

You think I am running upon the spears point, even upon the displeasure of God; well, I'll try that; *let come of it what will*; *Non desperati*
I have not one jealous thought of God: As one in sickness and *verba sunt sed*
pain, ready to die, seeing his friends about him mourn, said, *bene potius sper-*
Do not trouble your selves, I know God will do me no hurt. *van'is de Dei ope*
Job was willing to bear any thing at Gods hand, even a slaying, and *qui mox sua*
yet he believed he should not bear the weight of his little finger *spei rationem*
(as we say) upon the account of reproof. *Job* was not desperate, *add t. Marc.*
nor did he despise and dare God as wicked men use to do: tell them of hell, they care not for hell, tell them God will be angry, they regard not his anger. A gracious heart cannot slight, and would not for a world willingly incur the least displeasure, or so much as a frown from God, a frown from God would go to his very heart. But he can speak out of the height of his confidence, that in any just thing he will on, and bear all the blame which God will lay upon him, being well assured that God will lay no blame upon him at all from his anger or justice, though, in his wise providence, he should lay a multitude of the sorest afflictions upon him.

But what is it which makes the Saints so resolute with God that they fear not any hurt from God?

How can they fear any hurt from God, when they have so many promises of good from God? God hath not spoken one hard word against them all the Bible over, nor will he bear it that any should speak any thing but good concerning them. *Say to the righteous, it shall be well with him.* The Apostle assures us that the law (namely in the threatnings of it) is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly, and for sinners, &c. The law was not set to bring any of the punishments which are threatened there upon the righteous and holy: The godly man needs not fear any hurt from the law, because the law

is not made to puniſh or to condemn a righteous man, though it be ſet to guide and order the converſation of a righteous man : But the law is made for the wicked, they have cauſe to fear all the terrors of it, and God will at laſt open the treaſury of his wrath, and bring out all the weapons of his indignation that lye there, and ſtrike them thorow. Now, if the Saints fear not the threatening of the law, what need they fear any thing ? Other parts of the word are full of their conſolations : *Yea, whatſoever was written heretofore, was written for their learning, that they through patience and comfort of the Scripture might have hope,* and ſo reſt their ſouls ſweetly in the arms of God, as in the arms of a tender father. Why ſhould they be afraid of any evil from God, who hath promiſed them ſo much good ? yea, that *all ſhall work together for good to them* : May not this make any good man ſay confidently, I will do my duty, come on it what will : What can come of it but good ? becauſe the Lord hath ſaid all ſhall work together for good ; though haply I ſhall have a croſs, it will be good ; though the Lord leave me to the cruel dealings of men, it will be good. But eſpecially while we look up and conſider what Jeſus Chriſt hath done, what Chriſt hath ſuffered, what Chriſt hath undertaken and ſtands engaged in on their behalf, they may well put themſelves upon God, and appeal not only to his mercy, but ſtand to the utmoſt of his juſtice. They may expect hard meaſure from men (and the beſt is they can do well enough let men do their worſt) but as for all the hard meaſure they ſhall receive from God, *I dare* (as we ſay in our common ſpeech) *excuse them for a penny* ; I may ſay to any upright and faithfull ſoul, ſuch an one as Job was, Go on, let come on it what will, I will bear all the chidings, yea, all the ſmart thou ſhalt ever hear or feel from God.

Job having by theſe arguments, taken from the excellency of God, and his friends baſeneſs, prepared their minds to attention, and taken upon him a reſolution to ſpeak, ſpeaks home in the next words, *Wherefore do I take my fleſh in my teeth,* &c.

Job Chap. 13. Vers. 14, 15, 16.

Wherefore do I take my flesh in my teeth, and put my life in mine hand?

Though he slay me yet will I trust in him; but I will maintain mine own wayes before him:

He also shall be my salvation, for an hypocrite shall not come before him.

JOB resolved to speak in the former verse, and here he speaks indeed. But doth he not bite his own tongue? Or rather, Doth not his tongue bite him? while he saith, *Wherefore do I take my flesh in my teeth?* It is the Apostles great Axiome, founded in the laws of nature (Eph. 5. 29.) *No man ever hated his own flesh, but loveth and cherisheth it, &c.* Job speaks as if he hated or were cruel to his own flesh; *Wherefore do I take my flesh in my teeth, &c?* But if we enquire into this speech, we shall find it an argument not of any hatred against himself, but of abundant love to, and faith in God.

The words, in general, set forth the temper and state of Jobs spirit, or in what frame of heart he stood ready to speak unto God, having before resolved to speak: As if he had said, *I am far enough from rage, or from despair, I am neither out of my mis- nor out of my hopes, I come to plead my cause with God, having my heart filled with a strong confidence in God, resting and reposing my self upon him; and giving up all that I have or am unto him: Let me speak* (saith he, in the former verse) *and let come on me what will; at my peril be it, I will trust in God: And he seems to explain himself here; Do not think that I meant to tear my flesh, and to run violently upon my own ruine, when I said, let come on me what will; no, this was not the language either of fury or of despair, but of faith and confidence; for (as it follows) though he slay me, yet will I trust in him.*

Wherefore do I take my flesh in my teeth?

First, There are some who conceive that Job being in a commotion of spirit, upon some suggestion of the devil to despair, and to give up all for lost; did therefore indeed tear his own flesh

*Aliqui ſuſpican-
tur Iobum re-
ſpondentem &
repugnantem
hoſti inierius a-
liiquid inſtillanti
& ad ſelace-
randum ſtimu-
lanti. Pined.*

fleſh, and ſeek to caſt away his life; to which Job recalling him-ſelf, answereth here, *Wherefore do I take my fleſh in my teeth, and put my life in mine hand?* As if he ſhould have ſaid, O thou enemy, ſatan, why doſt thou tempt me thus? why doſt thou put me upon deſpairing thoughts? why wouldſt thou have me let go my hold of God? why doſt thou provoke me to carry my ſelf as a mad man, tearing my fleſh with my teeth, and even throwing my life out of my hand? This carrieth a fair ſence, ſuppoſing ſuch a temptation was upon him; and indeed there is no temptation ſo black and devil-like, but we may ſuppoſe the devil preſenting it to this afflicted ſoul.

Secondly, The words may be expounded as an enquiry after the reaſon or cauſe, why he endured ſuch grievous afflictions: *Wherefore do I take my fleſh in my teeth, and put my life in mine hand? What's the matter that I am caſt into ſuch extremities, and put upon ſuch grievous trials as I am at this time? Wherefore am I not only conſel'd but almoſt conſtrained by my bodily pains, and the troubles of my ſpirit to ſeek eaſe in tearing mine own fleſh, and in laying violent hands upon my body? if my geſtures or ſpeeches are unuſual, ſo are my ſorrows; the ſenſe of what I ſuffer even makes me do I know not what, or what I know I ſhould not.* Wherefore do I take my fleſh, &c. That's a ſecond interpretation, taken from the impatient poſtures of thoſe who are in great afflictions. Such ſometimes rend and tear their garments, ſo did Job in the beginning of this book, when he heard the firſt news of his ſad calamities, yea, ſuch will ſometimes tear or bite their own fleſh, and gnaw their tongues. 'Tis ſaid that when the fifth Angel poured out his vial upon the ſeat of the beaſt, that his kingdom was full of darkneſs (that is, of trouble) and they gnawed their tongues for pain (Rev. 16. 10.) They gnaw their tongues when they are puniſhed, who never ſmite upon their thighs, nor are pricked at the heart becauſe they have ſinned.

*Moris eſt affli-
ctis & indig-
nabundis veſtes
& membra la-
cerare. Merc.*

*Exiſtimatis me
deſperantis in-
ſtar mihi velle
mortem conſci-
ſcere, at quoſu-
ego mi lacerem,
& mihi ipſi
vitam eripiam?
Sanct.*

Thirdly, Others interpret the words as a denial of impatience, which his friends had often objected againſt him; As if he had ſaid, *You think that I carry my ſelf as a man that is deſperate, tearing my fleſh, &c. but you are much deceived in me, wherefore ſhould I do a thing ſo unbecoming one that truſts in God, as I do? I truſt in God, yea, though he ſhould ſlay me, yet will I truſt in him; I complain indeed of my own afflictions, ſenſe of pain cauſeth me to do ſo, but I do not complain againſt God, my faith and truſt*

in him, will not let me do so. Some conceive that here Job answers the words of Eliphaz at the beginning of the 5th chapter (ver. 2.) *Wrath killeth the foolish man, and envy slayeth the silly one;* wicked foolish men are so envious and unquiet in their spirits, that they even kill themselves with vexation; but why should I, what reason have I, who am assured of the good will of God to me, and am resolved to submit to his good pleasure, what reason have I to *tear my flesh, or throw my life out of mine hand?*

There is a fourth interpretation, that Job in this query hath reference to his own weakness and leanness, to the decay of his strength and flesh; *Wherefore do I take my flesh in my teeth?* As if he should have said, I am so wasted and consumed, so far spent, that all the flesh I have will scarce make a morsel, a man may take it up in his teeth at once. Thus it is expounded by that (chap. 19. 20.) *I am escaped with the skin of my teeth, I am nothing but skin and bones.* So *Wherefore do I take my flesh in my teeth?* Why am I brought thus low, thus lean? all my flesh will scarce make one mouth-full.

Lastly, Some render, not, *Wherefore do I, but, Wherefore should I take my flesh in my teeth?* that is, wherefore should I be cruel to my self? You think I utterly neglect my self, and have given up all my hopes; but I have not, I am not come to that pass yet, and I firmly believe I never shall. It is bad enough when we eat and devour one another, but it notes the worst of conditions when we devour and eat up our selves. It is said of the fool (Eccles. 4. 5.) *He foldeth his hands together, and eateth his own flesh.* Who is this fool? and, how doth the fool eat his own flesh? By the fool (in this place) we are to understand the sluggard or the slothful man; *folded hands are the emblem of idleness:* The idle man, or the sluggard, foldeth his hands together, that is, he will not work, he will take no pains: Now, he that will not labour, saith the Apostle, 2 *Thes. 3. neither let him eat.* The sluggard will not labour, and therefore he eateth his own flesh, having nothing else to eat. But doth the sluggard indeed feed upon his own flesh? Is he a *self-Canibal?* will he endure the pain of eating his own flesh, who will not take the pains to get himself bread to eat? No, but he is said to eat his own flesh, because while he favours himself too much, he is cruel to himself, he starves himself; hunger eats his flesh, because he hath nothing to satisfy his hunger; or he is said to eat his own

NOTE.
levare.

Quare levo
dentibus meis
carnes meas?

q. d. Ita confe-
ctus sum, ut
quantus ego

sum levavi den-
tibus possim, co-
quasi uno bolo
devorari. Pine.

Ex anima mea
stat super labia
mea statim co-

gestura, vide-
or, solis meis
dentibus reliqua

totius corporis
carnem susten-
tare. Bold.

Lacerare carnes
Sec. est seipsum
affligere.

flesh, because through sloath and the neglect of his calling he is brought into want, and into such want, that if he will eat, he must eat his own flesh, for he hath got neither boyld nor rost, neither wet nor dry to sustain his life. Or lastly, he may be said to eat his flesh, while he foldeth his hands, because he grows vex and passionate against himself, when he sees into what straits and bonds his lazy folded hands have brought him. He is a fool indeed that thinks folded hands will either fill his belly with meat, or his mind with content. So (Isa. 9. 20.) when the Prophet describeth the trouble of a people under the wrath of God, he shews that at last they shall grow cruel to themselves, *They shall eat every man the flesh of his own arm*, that is, they shall be so forgetful of all the laws of nature and friendship, that they shall either vex their nearest friends, as he speaks in the former verse, *No man shall spare his brother*, or they shall vex themselves, who are nearer than any friend; no man shall spare his own flesh. Thus the Lord threatened the oppressours of his people, that he would at last make them feed upon their own flesh, and drunken with their own blood. (Isa. 49. 26.) They who have been cruel against his servants shall be unnatural to themselves; they shall either destroy and vex one another, or every man shall destroy and vex himself, till they are all utterly consumed. *Job* sees no reason why he should do what such as these do for want of faith. *Wherefore should I take my flesh in my teeth?* I know my duty is to love and take care of my self, and I know God loves and takes care of me too. Some self-love is a vertue in all, a grace in some, it being the measure of that love we owe unto others, *Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thy self*. And as a man is bound to take a special care of all those (within his compass) whom God loves, so he ought to be much more careful of himself who hath received any evidence that God loves him: And hence it is (according to this exposition) that *Job* saith, *Wherefore do I, or, should I take my flesh in my teeth?* Shall I who have received so much kindness from God, and (notwithstanding these wounds) shall receive more, shall I, shall such a one as I be unkind to my self?

Lastly, These words (I conceive) carry in them a *self-reproof*: As if *Job* perceiving his spirit growing somewhat unquiet and unsettled, and himself ready to break out into passionate gestures, under the pressure of his continual troubles; did thus chide and rebuke

rebuke down these commotions, *Wherefore do I take my flesh in my teeth?* Why am I thus impatient? O my soul, doth this become thee, or doest thou now walk by that rule of obedience which thou art to learn by the things which thou sufferest? Is this the acting of a patient man, is this to submit to the hand and rod of a father? In this sense *David* (upon the apprehension of some undue strivings and struglings in his spirit) takes himself to task, schools and catechises his soul with serious questions. (*Psal.* 42. 11.) *Why art thou cast down, O my soul? why art thou disquieted within me? hope thou in God.* *David* after these chidings bids his soul hope in God, and *Job* after these chidings makes highest professions of his hope in God, *Wherefore do I take my flesh in my teeth, &c.* *Though he slay me, yet I will trust in him.*

Hence Observe,

First, *That in great afflictions a man is apt to afflict himself and to add to his own afflictions.*

When we have more upon us then we are well able to bear, we usually put more weight upon our selves. We scarce feel lesser burthens at all, and great ones we feel too much. When God smites us we are ready to tear our selves.

Secondly, Consider the ground of this, why is it that men (as *vt qui in cruciatibus carnes suas mordere alloqui se sentiunt, sic ego dum hac loquor.*) afflict themselves when they are afflicted? It is because they hope to find some ease in it.

Hence Note,

That a pain of our own adding seems to lessen our received pains.

And indeed it doth somewhat draw the mind from thinking of what it feelth: Every trouble is the less to us by how much we mind it the less; and if we could not mind it at all, it would be no trouble to us at all. For this reason, in extremity of pain, as in the stone, gout, toothach, men usually divert and turn off their thoughts, as much as they can, from what they feel, by discourse and the company of friends; yea, we shall see them sometimes bite their lips or their fingers; such pain added to pain gives some mitigation of pain.

Thirdly, Note,

It is sinful to be active in our own miseries, or to afflict our selves.

Wherefore should I take my flesh in my teeth? It is unnatural to do so. It is unnatural to take the flesh of others in our teeth;

more to take our own; every man is nearer to himself than to any other, therefore a sin committed against our selves is greater, because we sin against a nearer engagement. We ought to suffer cheerfully from the hand of God or man, but we must not suffer from our own. No man must be his own carver, either in his comforts or in his sorrows. We must let God alone to cut out and measure our portion of both. *Wherefore do I take my flesh in my teeth?*

Fourthly, Observe,

A godly man will not take his own part, nor bear with himself when he doth evil, or goe besides the rule, whether in active or passive obedience.

He is willing to receive counsel or reproof from others, and he is upon all discoveries of the naughtiness of his heart, his own reprover: he usually casts the first stone at his sin with his own hand, and blames himself more than any other man can for his own secret distempers or outward miscarriages. A carnal heart doth what it can to excuse its sin, or to flatter himself in it: but a holy heart doth both aggravate and rebuke its own sin; *Wherefore am I so vain, so earthly? why am I so proud, and so impatient? David needeth no man to accuse him of his sinful envy at the prosperity of the wicked, he layes on load upon himself (Psal. 73. 22.) So foolish was I, and ignorant, even as a beast before thee. He once indeed (being under a desertion) wanted a Nathan to bring his sin home to his conscience; but when he was come to himself, he could be his own Nathan: As for me (saith he, ver. 2.) my feet were almost gone: Why was I thus foolish? So Job here, why am I thus unquiet? Wherefore do I take my flesh in my teeth, &c?*

And put my life in mine hand?

These words have the same meaning, in general, with the former. I shall only open the importance of the phrase.

First, *Putting the life into the hand*, is interpreted for a solicitous care of life. As if he had said, *Wherefore do I keep life so close, as if I were loath to part with it?* If God stay me I will trust in him; what need I take so much care of this life to hold it in my hand? Let it go, I know it shall be well enough with me; if I lose this life, I shall find a better, for I believe in God. When a man would preserve and keep a thing safe, he carries it in his hand, he

Animam meam sollicitus custodio, non secus ac rem preciosissimam, quam nusquam tuto deponere, nec ulli credere, audeamus. Pined.

will

will not lay it out of his hand. And that is one reason why the Saints are ſaid to be in the hand of God, and to reſign themſelves into his hand; *Into thine hand do I commit my ſpirit*: it is their deſire to be in the hand of God; and Chriſt aſſureth us (*Job. 10.*) that we being in his fathers hand, none can take us out. Holy Job knew his life, his ſpiritual life was in the hand of God, and that his going out of this natural life, was but a paſſage to eternal life: Wherefore then (according to this expoſition) ſhould he ſo ſollicitouſly put his life into his own hand? *We need not fear to part with that which the grace of God hath ſound.*

Secondly, Others underſtand by *life, the whole man*, and ſo the putting of his life in his hand, notes bodily infirmity; as if being weak with ſickneſs, he was forced to lean upon his hand. *Wherefore do I put my life in my hand?* that is, wherefore am I brought thus low, that I do even go upon my hands? Little children before they can go upon their feet, go upon all four, as we ſay, they go upon their hands. The feet and legs are the pillars and ſupporters of the body. *Jobs* pillars (ſaith this interpretation) ſhrunk under him, he muſt walk and live upon his hands. The learned Author quoted in the margin contends much for this ſence: but I ſhall not ſtay upon it.

Thirdly, *Wherefore do I put my life in my hand?* Is (as another phraſe) a metaphorical ſpeech, implying, that a man is dying or near to death: the life of ſuch a man ſits upon his lips, or is come out into his hand, ready to ſhake hands with him, and return to God that gave it. As if he had ſaid, my life is gone out of my body, I am in the ſtate of death, or (as his words are alſo gloſſed) my life is ſo waſted and diminished, that it is ſcarce a handful. Why is it thus? Is it becauſe Satan hopes that yet in the extremity of my affliction he ſhall obtain his wiſh, and hear me with my laſt breath blaſpheme God and die? If that be his end he ſhall miſs his end, for if the Lord ſlay me, yet will I truſt in him.

Laſtly, We may expound the words yet more clearly and ſatisfactorily by divers other concurrent Scriptures, all which carry this plain ſence, *that parting of the life into the hand*, notes only the expoſing of our life unto peril or danger. So *Jephthah* beſpeaks the quarrelling *Ephraimites* (*Judg. 12. 3.*) *When I ſaw that ye delivered me not, I put my life in my hands, and paſſed over againſt the children of Ammon*: that is, when I ſaw you deſerted me, and

and would give me no assistance, I resolved to put it to an adventure; I put my life in my hands and passed over against the children of *Ammon*: I went upon great disadvantages, my Army was not a match for the enemy, nor fit to meet them in the field, yet I ran that hazard, I put my life in my hands. So (1 Sam. 19. 4.) when *Jonathan* pleaded for *David* before his father *Saul*, and told him what good service he had done for him, and what he had deserved of the kingdom, he instanceth in that unparallelled act of valour, when he undertook *proind Goliath*. *He did put* (saith he) *his life in his hand, and slew the Philistine*, that is, he put himself into a great danger: the *Philistine* was such a monster of men, that the whole Army of *Israel* trembled at his challenge; therefore surely a single man was in great danger to deal with him hand to hand: *David* doing so put his life in his hand. The Witch of *Endor* is at this language with *Saul* (1 Sam. 28. 31.) *I have put my life in my hand*, that is, I have ventured my life in raising up of *Samuel*; this she said because there was a law lately made against Witches by *Saul* himself. Once more, *David* useth the same expression (Psal. 119. 109.) *My soul is continually in mine hand, yet do I not forget thy law*. The souls of the Saints are always in the hands of God, and it is both their safety and their honour that they are so. Why doth *David* say, my soul is in mine hand, had he call'd it out of the hand of God, and taken the care of it upon himself? Nothing less. His meaning is only this, *I walk in the midst of dangers, and among a thousand deaths continually, I am in deaths often, my life is exposed to perils every day, yet do I not forget thy law*: I keep close to thee, and will keep close to thee whatsoever comes of it. *Augustine*, upon that place, doth ingenuously confess that he understood not what *David* meant, by *having his soul in his hands*: But *Jerome*, another of the Ancients teacheth us, that it is an Hebraism, signifying a state of extreamest peril. The Greeks also have drawn it into a proverb, speaking the same thing.

But why doth the holding or putting the life in the hand, signifie the exposing of the life to peril? There is a two-fold reason of it.

First, Because those things which are carried openly in the hand are apt to fall out of the hand, and being carried in sight they are apt to be snatcht or wrested out of the hand. And therefore, though to be in the hand of God, signifies *safety*, because

Est Hebraismus,
quo significatur
vitam habere
periculo exposi-
tam; Hic Ep.
ad Romanos.
Εν τῇ χειρὶ
ἐχούμενος
Grac. proverb.
pro versari
inter pericula.
Quod manu
portatur facile
excidit, facile e-
tiam diripi po-
test, & si ser-
vatur sola Dei
protectione ser-
vari videtur.
Mccc.

cause his hand is armed with irrefiſtible power to protect us : Yet for a man to carry a thing in his own hand, is to carry it in danger, becauſe his hand is weak, and there are ſafer waies of carrying or conveying a thing, than openly in the hand. If a man be to ride a long journey with any treaſure about him, he doth not carry it in his hand, but puts it in ſome ſecret and cloſe place where it may be hid, and ſo more ſecure. The *Caldæe* Paraphraſt, to expreſs the elegancy of that place fore-cited out of the *Pſalm*, gives it thus, *My life is in as much danger as if it ſtood upon the very ſuperficies or outſide of my hand*, as if he had no hold of it, but it ſtood barely upon his hand ; for that which is ſet upon the plain or palm of the hand, and not grasped, is in greater danger.

Things ſafe kept are hidden or held faſt. *There was a treaſure hid in the field, which when the man had found, he went and hid it* (Mar. 13. 44.) he did not carry it in his hand, but hid it, laid it up ſafely. So our life is ſaid to be hid with Chriſt in God (Col. 3. 3.) which notes not only the ſecrecy of this ſpiritual life, but the ſafety of it alſo. As ſome things are hid that they may not be ſeen, ſo other things are hid, that they may not be loſt. Hence, to carry the life in the hand, imports the danger of loſing of it.

Secondly, There is another reaſon of that ſpeech, becauſe when a man is about to deliver a thing or to give it up, he takes it in his hand. They that put themſelves upon great perils and dangers for God and his people, deliver up their lives and their all to God. Hence that counſel of the Apoſtle (1 Pet. 4. 19.) *Let them that ſuffer according to the will of God, commit the keeping of their ſouls to him in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator.* So here, the life of men in danger is ſaid to be put in the hand, becauſe ſuch are as it were ready to deliver and commit their lives unto God, that he would take care of their lives to preſerve them from the danger, or to take them to himſelf, if they loſe them in his ſervice, either doing or ſuffering according to his will. That of the Apoſtle comes near this notion (1 Joh. 3. 16.) *We ought to lay down our lives for the brethren* : now, if we lay them down we muſt put them into our hands, as a man that is ready to lay down money upon a bargain, or for a commodity, takes his purſe into his hand. Job had his life in his hand, ready to deliver it up to God, yea, though God ſhould ſeem to take it violently from him, yet he would willingly reſign it to him and truſt him with it. This ſence carries a clear reaſon of ſuch kind of ſpeaking, yet I do

not

Anima mea periclitatur, ac ſi in ſuperficie manus mea eſſet. Chald. Paraph.

Qua aliquis amittere times diligenter abſcondit. Aquin. in loc.

not conceive it to be the particular reason of it in this place : For, as to such a sense, *Job* should rather confidently affirm, I will, or I do put my life in my hand, then either question or expostulate with himself, *Wherefore do I put my life in mine hand ?*

Now, seeing *Job*, speaking thus, refutes a charge that was brought against him, that he was careless of his life, or through distemper and impatience cared not what became of it ; We may Observe,

That though we are to venture or put our lives unto any hazard when God calleth us, yet no man may expose his life without a call.

Job would have his friends know, that he did not carry his life open in his hand as a thing he made no reckoning of. Our lives are given us of God, and till he bid us bring them forth and carry them in our hands, we must keep them as safe as we can, I only hint this here, because the strength of *Jobs* intendment in these words lyeth in their connection with the following verse, to which I pass.

Verse 15. *Though he slay me yet will I trust in him ; but I will maintain mine own integrity.*

Why should you think that I am impatient ? Why should you censure me as desperate and careless ? This is the temper and frame of my soul ; judge you of it, whether it look like your conceptions of me. Let God do what he will with me, slay me, tear me, take away my life, I am resolved what to do, *to trust in him.* Is this impatience or despair ?

Further, If we consider the former expostulations in the last exposition, as a reproof or a check to the motions of his own heart toward impatience ; Then these words are the lesson of instruction which he gives his soul. What ? Thou my soul in rage ? dost thou bid me take my flesh in my teeth ? I tell thee what my former resolves have been, and what my present duty is, even to trust God in all estates. And now I am upon that resolve again, *Though he slay me yet will I trust in him.*

*Afflictiones
graviiores mor-
tis & occisionis
nomine signifi-
cantur. Dnls.*

Though he slay me.

Slaying speaks death, and that a violent death, yet all slaying is not death. (*Rom. 8.36.*) *For thy sake are we killed, or slain, all the day long.* All the persecutions and troubles which the Saints endure

endure are their slaying, though they be not all unto death, yet they all go upon the account of death. *For thy sake are we slain all the day long;* Paul was alive, and yet in the number of these slain: By being slain all the day long, he means a being alwaies within the view, or under the sufferance of bloody persecutors.

Though he say me. Slaying is the utmost of outward evils.

Hence Observe (before I come to the main)

That there is no outward evil so bad, but God may lay it upon his best servants.

Job puts this supposition as his own case. *Though he say me,*

Yet will I trust in him.

There is a double reading of these words. Some read them negatively, others (as we) affirmatively.

The reason why the negation is added by some interpreters, is because the same Hebrew word in sound, which we translate, *him*, signifies also the adverb of denial, *not* or *no*: therefore the

Majorites observe that this text is to be corrected in the reading.

There is a like variety of reading upon the occasion of this Monosyllable, *Lo* (2 King 8. 10.) Where when Hazael was sent by

Benhadad to enquire of Elisha whether he should recover of his

disease whereof he was sick, Elisha said unto him, *Go say unto*

him, thou shalt certainly recover, howbeit the Lord hath shewed

me thou shalt surely die. As if he had said, though the disease in

itself be not mortal, yet thou shalt die of it. Whereas others

translate it, *Elisha said unto him, say, thou shalt not certainly re-*

cover, for the Lord hath shewed me that he shall surely die.

Now, the negative in Job hath a double reading. First, By way

of interrogation, and then the sence is the same with our trans-

lation, *Though, or if he say me, shall I not trust in him?* that is,

yes, I will, or I ought to trust in him; should I distrust God be-

cause he afflicts me, when as he afflicts to shew his faithfulness,

I will not do it. Others read it negatively, without an inter-

rogation, thus, *Though he say me, I will not expect; or behold he*

will say me, I will not hope. So the interlineal.

But would Job say so, can this stand with the state of grace

and holiness? Were not this indeed to give up the cause, and to

blaspheme God?

Lo, in Hebraeo

mutatis literis

mobilibus, aut

non aut ei vel

ipsi, sonat.

Maforita hunc

locum enumerant

inter ea que

cum scribantur

legantur

Merc.

Vade dic ei sa-

naberis, quan-

quam aliqui ex-

istimant ambi-

bologiam fuisse

responsionem,

nam vox eadem

sola diversa

Scriptura sig-

nificat, aut ei,

aut non.

Dic non: omnino

revalescas, Jan.

Si enecaret me

non sperarem?

Jun.

Eccce occidit me,

non sperabo.

Mont.

I answer, There is a ſence wherein we may acquit *Job* of this charge, though we ſhould read it negatively, which yet is not the ſence I ſhall ſtay upon: For the clearing of it, I muſt premiſe two things concerning the Original text.

1. That the Hebrew word which we tranſlate, *to truſt* (of which more a little after) ſignifies alſo to expect or look for a thing at the hands of another.

*Quamvis ab eo
mortis ſenten-
tiam reciperem
tamen meliorem
ab eo ſententiam
non expectarem,
quippe qui no-
verim non niſi
juſtiſſimè eum
hoc feciſſe.* Bol.

2. The word ſtands alone in the Hebrew without thoſe words which we ſupply, *in him*; and muſt be rendred thus, according to the ſence under hand, *Though he ſlay me, I will not expect*; and then the meaning may be given thus; Although God ſhould pronounce that heavy ſentence of death upon me, yea, ſign the writ for my execution, yet I would not expect a more gentle ſentence or look for a reprieve, becauſe I know that what God doth to any man, or to me, he is juſt in doing it; I know that if he load me with the heavieſt afflictions, he may do it, and (without any further pleading or expectations) I am ready to ſubmit unto it; and yet in this I do not carry my ſelf as a wicked man, for *I will ſtill maintain my wayes*. (as he adds in the next words) neither in this do I caſt off all my hopes or expectations in God; for *he ſhall be my ſalvation*, as he ſpeaks in the next verſe. Thus much he had ſaid in effect before (*chap. 9. 15.*) *Whom, though I were righteous, yet would I not answer*, that is, I would not ſtand upon any terms with God, or expect any other terms from him: though God ſhould wound me deeper, yet I would not hope to have him alter what he had done, as if I thought he had done me wrong. *Ton, my friends, conceive that I complain of God, as if he had been cruel and too ſevere towards me; no, I do not think ſo, for if he ſhould ſlay me, I would not ſue to him to take off that ſentence as unjuſt; but I would willingly lay my life down at his feet, knowing that he will give me a more deſirable life than this.* Thus we may fairly bring *Job* off in the negative reading; he was ready to undergo the hardeſt meaſure, and yet not to think hardly of God, or ſtand expecting any reverſal of his judgement as too hard.

*Eccce accidis me,
non ſpero me-
hinc liberandum,
et ſi fore ut con-
valescam; ætium
eſt de me, de-
ploratus eſt hic
morbus.* Merc.
e Rab. Lev.

Again, thus, *Behold he will ſlay me, I will not hope*, that is, I ſee my bodily eſtate and outward comforts brought ſo low, that it were folly to hope; Why ſhould I hope for life and proſperity here, when providence ſpeaks to me of nothing but death, and me thinks I ſee the Lord ready to ſlay me? my diſeaſe is not for

cure,

cure, nor my wounds for healing, why then should I stand hoping about these poor transitory things? yet I would not have you think I am without all hope, I have better things to hope for than these, and about them I have a lively hope, though I die, as he adds in the next verse: *He also shall be my salvation, and an hypocrite shall not come before him.*

But I shall pass that negative translation, and give the sense as it lies affirmatively before us in ours. The strength of faith is never fully tried but under and upon a cross: Death and hope seem to be at the greatest distance; here we have death and hope brought together: Death could not kill *Job's* hope, his hope did almost enliven his death. *Job* had more life in death, then most have in their lives. God could easily slay *Job's* body, but his faith could not be slain. God will not slay faith, and no other power can. Behold *Job* dying and believing. *Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him*; and so this text is the triumph of *Job's* faith over sorrow and death: The uprightness of his heart, the greatness of his spirit, the undauntedness of his courage, his contempt of the world, and his longing desires after God, are all wrapt up and spoken out together in these words. As if he had said, *I see the Lord is determined to take my life, but what if he do? do you think that I have nothing to trust him for beyond that? If he destroy my body, I know he will save my soul: I have matters of greater moment to trust God with than those which concern this frail piece of flesh: Death it self shall not cast me down from the footings of my faith, or beat me off from the hold-fast of my hope in God.*

Again, As these words have in them an assertion of *Jobs* faith, so also a vindication of his person from the suspicions or accusations of his friends. For how can he be charged as wicked who professeth trust in God, and promiseth that he will trust in him, even unto death, and in it.

The word which we translate *trust*, signifies also to *expect* or *hope*; and it signifies expectation, first, with patience and waiting: secondly, with assurance of receiving that which we wait for: thirdly, with present joy, or joy concomitant with sorrow. So then, *I will trust him*, is not only, *I will stay more time*, but *I will stay with patience*, with assurance, yea, and with joyfulness.

But how can a man trust God, when he is slain? He that is

dead is paſt hope; he hath for ever done truſting and believing. For when a man is ſlain and dead; he either goes to heaven or to hell: If to hell, there's no hope: if to heaven, there's no need of hope; what ſhould a man hope for that which he enjoys, or truſt when he is in poſſeſſion?

I answer, firſt, All ſlaying in Scripture ſence is not to bodily death; it notes ſometimes only a civil death, or the putting of a perſon totally out of all his former power or preſent comforts. So the ſlaying of the witneſſes is interpreted, *Revel. 11*. Take ſlaying ſo, and then, to truſt when we are ſlain, is no more then to depend upon God for deliverance in extremeſt dangers.

Secondly, Though a man who is actually ſlain, cannot be ſaid to hope; yet a man may ſay I will hope or truſt though I am ſlain: For ſo this truſt is the act of a living man concerning ſomewhat which he ſhall enjoy or be after death: So any believer dying, whether it be by a natural or a violent death, may ſay, Though I die yet I will truſt in God: Firſt, For the ſalvation of my ſoul: Secondly, For the reſurrection of my body: Thirdly, For the eternal reſt both of ſoul and body together in glory.

But what was it that Job was thus reſolved to truſt God for?

Take ſlaying in the firſt ſence, for greater afflictions than any he had yet felt; and then, *I will truſt in him*, is firſt, a ſerious profeſſion of his faithfulneſs and adhering to God and his waies what ever God ſhould do with him, or how great diſcouragements ſoever God ſhould put upon him. So we may well expound Job by that admirable proteſtation of the Church, *Pſal. 44. 17, 18, 19*. *All this is come upon us; yet have we not forgotten thee, neither have we dealt falſly in thy covenant; our heart is not turned back, neither have our ſteps declined from thy way, though thou haſt ſore broken us in the place of dragons, and covered us with the ſhadow of death*. Truſting in God, in a large ſence, is put for the whole compaſs of our duty to him, eſpecially in evil times. Or ſecondly, *I will truſt him*, is a high profeſſion of his faith, that God would give remedy to the worſt of his preſent, or poſſible outward evils, and raiſe him up or reſtore him again, how low ſoever he ſhould be brought.

Take ſlaying in the ſecond ſence, for death, and then his meaning is, that though God ſhould take away this life, yet he had a hope laid up beyond this life: and this I conceive moſt proper here;

here, or certainly intended here, because he had so often given up his hopes of a temporal restoring, and adds expressly in the next verse; *He also shall be my salvation.*

Hence Observe,

First, *The character of a godly man; he is one that trusteth in God.*

This is proper to godliness. It is the breath of the new creature, and only by the breath of the new creature can these words be spoken indeed, *I will trust in God.* (1 Pet. 3. 5.) The Apostle describing the holy women of the former time, exhorted that they may be a pattern to the women of the age to which he wrote, *For (saith he) after this manner the holy women also in old time, who trusted in God, adorned themselves.* He describes holy women by this, they *trusted in God.* A carnal man is a man without hope (1 Thes. 4. 13.) *I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that you sorrow not even as others which have no hope.* Who are these? The Apostle tells us, *Eph. 2. 12. Aliens from the common-wealth of Israel, strangers from the covenant of promises, having no hope.* A heathen (every carnal man is no better) hath no hope, or if he have, it is like himself a carnal hope, in the nature of it, because it is so in the object of it: His hope is in man (Jer. 17. 5.) *Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm:* He that is in the flesh trusts only in the flesh, and fleshly things. (Psal. 52. 7.) *He trusts in the abundance of his riches:* he can trust in earthly riches, but he cannot put forth an act of trust upon the unsearchable riches of God: It is an easie matter to say the words, but it is the hardest matter under heaven to say and say it truly, to say and do it, *Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him.*

Secondly, Observe,

True trust can triumph over a worse condition then what is present, how bad soever it is.

Job doth not say, *I will trust in God,* though now my case is very sad, but he puts a harder case then ever he was yet in, *Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him.* David (Psal. 3. 6.) puts hard cases to his soul, *I from thousands of people set themselves against me round about, yet will I not be afraid:* David was not in such straits at that time (though in straits) he was not beleaguered with ten thousand enemies, but he could put those straits to himself, and yet

yet be enlarged in dependance upon God. We have *David* again breathing out the very same spirit of faith in like expressions, *Psal. 27. 2.* and *Psal. 46. 2.* *Though the mountains be removed, and though the earth be carried into the midst of the sea, yet will not we fear.* He puts not only such cases as he was not in, but such as there was no probability that ever he should be in; *that the hills should be carried into the sea*, that earth and sea should mingle. *David's* faith conquered not only real evils, but all imaginable evils. As the Lord puts the remotest suppositions to shew his own faithfulness, so do the Saints to shew their faith (*Isa. 54. 10.*) *Though the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed, yet my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord.* Though the whole course of nature fail, yet the Lord will not let one jot of the covenant of grace fail: And that's indeed the reason why the Saints rejoyce over all difficulties, even because they know God is able to help them in greatest difficulties: He hath not spent the treasures nor the stores of his wisdom and power upon former salvations; they know if they need stronger and stranger salvations, he hath strength and wisdom enough to work them, and will, because he is as faithful and true, as he is strong or wise.

Thirdly, Observe,

Trust is due to God, it is due to God in all estates.

Some trust in God in fair weather; when they are full they can trust in God for bread; and when they are safe, they can trust him for protection: but for a man to trust God for bread in wants, and for safety when he slayeth him, to trust God in all turns, this is not only a benefit to our selves, but a duty unto God. There is nothing more due to God, as God, then trust is: even a man in high place looks to be trusted, and the higher any man is, the more he looks to be trusted. And shall not the most high God? We read (*Judg. 9. 15.*) that when the trees had chosen the bramble to be their King, the bramble puts these terms upon them, (*Judg. 9. 15.*) *If indeed you anoint me king over you, then come and put your trust in my shadow, and if not, let fire come out of the bramble, and devour the Cedars of Lebanon.* Even a bramble looks to be trusted in, if you set him up for your king. Now, if creatures love to be trusted, though they be but exalted brambles, how much more doth the Lord, the great and glorious

Lord

Lord exalted over all? Surely if he be not trusted by us, we shall be consumed by him; a fire will proceed from him to devour the tallest Cedars that either distrust or do not trust in him.

Fourthly, *To trust God is an high honour done to God.* Trust is a great part of divine worship. It is natural worship, the very discoveries of God unto us, though he should never manifest his will concerning this act, call for this. When it is discovered to us (which the word every where doth) that God is above all, that he is all-sufficient, that he is unchangeable, these very discoveries though there were never a rule for it in all the word of God, would teach us to trust upon God. There are some parts of Gods worship which we should never have known if he had not given us a direct and express rule for them. Such is all his instituted worship; The special forms of worship depend upon the revealed will of God, but the general worship of God (such as to love him, to fear him, to trust upon him) flow from the manifestations of his nature, or from his very being.

But you will say, What is trust?

Take it in brief thus, *Pure spiritual trust is the highest exercise of faith, whereby looking upon God in himself and in his Son through the promises, the soul is raised above all fears or discouragements, above all doubts and disquietments, either for the removing of that which is evil, or for the obtaining of that which is good.* This is the nature of that trust which is the honour of God; and his natural worship, as natural, is opposed to special and instituted worship.

Fifthly, Observe,

A believer seeth God good to him, or a friend to him, when he receiveth nothing but evil from his hand, and sees nothing but frowns upon his face.

Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him; There is no man will trust a professed enemy at all, nor a reconciled enemy much: therefore Job did not think God an enemy, though he slew him; forasmuch as he resolved to trust him, though he slew him. No man will trust him that he suspects to hate him; A godly man hath good thoughts of God, let him be doing what he will with him. When God put Abraham upon that hard task to slay his son, he yet knew that God loved him, and therefore he was willing to do it; and he would trust God for that son, of which the promise of God said he should live, though the command of

God

God said he shall dye. Now, as *Abraham* (the Father of believers) was perswaded, that God loved him when he bid him slay his son: So though God himself slay a believer, yet he believes that he lives in the love of God. While a believer is all over as it were in gore blood, whilst he is all wounds, and wounded (he sees) by the hand of God, yet he cannot be beaten out of this hold, God is good to him, yea, that *truly God is good to all his Israel*. Christ had said to his Disciples (*Job. 11. 11.*) *Our friend Lazarus sleepeth*, but when *Martha* heard him give order to take away the stone from the Sepulchre (*v. 39.*) *Lord* (saith she) *by this time he stinketh, for he hath been dead four days*. Christ answers her, said I not unto thee, that if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldst see the glory of God? Though I was not so friendly to my friend as to come and keep him alive when he was only sick, or to raise him up as soon as he was dead, yet do not think but I am a friend to him still: Did not I say, that if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldst see the glory of God? I have not neglected my friend. Though I have let him lie four daies in the grave, yet he hath lain in my heart all this while; We may say in all our extremities, though God lets us die, and lie in the grave either of death or affliction, till we stink, that yet we are his dead friends, and he is our living friend, in whose bosome and embraces we have lain all the while. See how *Paul* exulteth in the love of God in the midst of all troubles and persecutions: Suppose sword and famine should compasse him about, *Rom. 8. 38, 39.* *I am perswaded that neither life nor death, &c. nor any other creature should be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord*. Holy *David* of old rejoiced in this assurance, (*1 Sam. 23. 5.*) *Although my house be not so with God, yet I know God is my friend, for he hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure, for this is all my salvation and all my desire although he make it to grow: that is, though my house should not flourish in worldly dignity and outward pomp, yet he is my salvation, and I can desire no more.*

Sixty, Observe, *Job* had said before, *Wherefore do I take my flesh in my teeth, and put my life in mine hand? why should I take such courses as these to ease my present trouble? though he slay me, I will trust in him: as if he had said, my remedy is in God, not in tearing my flesh, or in impatient gestures: these would prove as miserable comforts as my friends are comforters: the nearest*

nearest way to sound consolation, is to trust in God:

Hence Observe,

That trust in God is the best ease to the soul, and a remedy of evils before the remedy comes.

God often defers the remedy as to our sense, when he gives it to our faith. He that believes not is condemned already, he hath his judgement before the judgement: and he that believes is saved and eased already: he hath his deliverance before deliverance. Whilst our wounds have no cure, trust in God cures them. Faith is a remedy before a remedy in all kind of evils. (Isa. 50. ult.) *Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of his servants, that walketh in darkness and hath no light? Let him trust in the Name of the Lord, and stay upon his God.* Trust in God, though you are in darkness, though you see no light, this is light before light, pardon before pardon. Trust God in temptations, and you are above temptations, while you groan under the burden of them. Trust God in weakness, and you are strong: Paul in such a case besought the Lord thrice, and was answered with this, 2 Cor. 12. 9. *My grace (not thy grace) is sufficient for thee, for my strength is made perfect in weakness;* (he doth not say, thy weakness is perfected into strength.) This satisfied Paul to the full, as he concludes in the next words, *Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.* When we rest with our weaknesses upon Christ, the power of Christ rests upon us. And then, as it was with Paul (vers. 10.) *when we are weak then are we strong, when we are sorrowful then have we joy, when we are in bondage then are we free.* Thus by trusting we have either a remedy from, or a remedy in all our troubles and afflictions.

Further, *Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him;* his faith was pitcht upon God, and he passeth by friends and creatures, as if he had said, *Truly though you endeavour to comfort me, and would give me your utmost help, yet I cannot trust upon you; but if God should slay me, I would trust him: though all the world should engage and promise to do their best for me, I could not trust them; but if God should do the worst against me, yet I would trust in him.*

Hence Observe,

That we can never trust God too much, nor creatures too little.

We can never trust God too much, because as he is God, all our trust is but due to him. And we cannot trust creatures too little, because they are but creatures, and so no trust is due to them. There is a trust of charity or civility due to man; it is not good to be alwayes jealous one of another; but though there may be a trust of charity, yet there must not be a trust or confidence upon any creature. *Some jealousies of man are against the rule of love to man, but all trust in man is against the law of duty to God.* Now, as it is a duty to trust in God, so if we look upon God, we have the greatest encouragements; if upon our selves, the greatest cause to trust him.

First, Consider *the Being and Essence of God*, and there's enough to draw out trust. His Being is in and from himself. *It is best to depend upon him who is absolutely independent.*

Secondly, Consider the excellency of his Being. Job said to his friends a little before, *Doth not his excellency make you afraid? I may say here as truly, Doth not his excellency make you confide, or trust?* The power, the wisdom, the goodness, the mercy, the faithfulness, the truth, the unchangeableness of God, these, all these excellencies of his Being, call upon us to trust in him. Who would not trust in him that hath all, and is All? Who would not trust in him that can do whatsoever he pleaseth, and will do whatsoever he hath promised?

Thirdly, Consider him in his relations to us: He is our Creator, that's the ground of trust given by the Apostle, *Let us commit our selves unto him in well doing as unto a faithful Creator.* He that made us will surely take care of us: We may well give up our selves and our all unto him who gave us our selves, and our all. And if creation assure us of preservation, then redemption assures us of it much more. God was at so much cost in making of us, that he will certainly take care of us; but he hath been at much more cost in redeeming us, and therefore he will much more take care of us, upon the account of that relation. He hath been at too much charge with us, to lay us aside and throw us by. Again, He is a Father; *earthly fathers lay up and provide for their children*, and shall not our heavenly Father? All the relations wherein we stand to God are grounds of our trust upon him, and engagements of his assistance to, and providence over us.

Fourthly, The operations and workings of God call for this trust:

trust: What hath God wrought? and what cannot God work? He works without, and he works within, he stops or moves all the wheels of all creatures as seemeth best to him. The tongues, the hands, the hearts, the wils, the affections, the love, the hatred, the anger, the desires of all the sons of men are under his power, and at his dispose. Who would not trust in God?

Fifthly, If we look upon our selves as creatures, and all creatures with our selves, we shall quickly find a necessity of trusting God. As creatures are not of themselves, so not in themselves. VVe receive life from God, and in him we live. If we depart from him in whom we live, we shall surely die. Our natural, as well as our spiritual life, is preserved by the power of God. The life of man consisteth not in the abundance of that which he possesseth, but in dependance upon him in whom he believeth. Man is not sufficient of himself (in spirituals) to think a good thought, that sufficiency is of God: and all temporal good things are not sufficient for man, their sufficiency is of God. A horse is a vain thing to save a man, bread is a vain thing to strengthen a man; wine is a vain thing to chear a man, yea, wisdom is a vain thing to counsel a man, without God. As there is nothing which the devil doth more oppose, or God more require, so there is nothing which we more need, or by which we gain more then by trusting God: God gives himself most out to us when we trust most in him: As an act of trust gives most glory to God, so it fetcheth most good from God. Our trusting in creatures makes them vain to us; and our not trusting in God makes him (in a sence) vain to us; that is, God will not give out his strength and help, if we do not trust him: he is as one weak when we trust him weakly, he is as one empty-handed when our hearts are empty of trust.

For the advancement of this grace of *trust*, take these three rules from what we find in *Job*, whose trust was risen to such a height, that it did not only live, but was lively in the very approaches of death.

First, *Labour to know God.* *Job* was a man acquainted with God, and therefore he trusted in God (*Psal.* 9. 10.) *They that know thy Name will trust in thee.* The reason why God is trusted so little, is because he is so little known. VVe say of some men, *They are better known than trusted,* and if we knew some men more, we should trust them less: But the truth is, God is alwayes

trusted as much as he is known, and if we knew him more, we would trust him more; every discovery of God shews somewhat which renders him more worthy of our trust.

Secondly, *Recollect and meditate former experiences.* The consideration of what God hath done for us keeps the heart up in trust that he will do more.

Thirdly, *Be upright.* That which made Job confident to trust upon God though he should slay him, was the uprightness of his heart with God. He may trust God who is faithful to God. Job had Gods own hand to his certificate, that his heart was upright. Beloved. (saith that beloved Disciple, *John 1. epist. 3. 21.*) if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence towards God. An hypocrite may presume, but he cannot be truly confident. Besides, 'tis a dishonour to God, when they say they trust him, whose lives are dishonourable to him: They make God (as much as lies in them) a partaker in their wickedness, who pretend he will take their parts while they are wicked and do wickedly. Railing *Rabshakeh* tells *Hezekiah* (2 King. 18. 20, 21, 22.) Thou sayest (but they are but vain words) I have counsel and strength for war; and when he had beaten him off from humane helps, he labours to drive him from divine help also; thou perhaps wilt say, I trust in God; If thou saist so, remember, Is not that he whose altars and whose high places *Hezekiah* hath taken away, and hath said to Judah and Jerusalem, ye shall worship before this Altar in Jerusalem? As if he had said, I *thou* trust in God? thou who hast dishonoured God, pulled down his altars, &c? *Rabshakeh* thought that *Hezekiah* had done God great disservice in destroying the altars; and if it had been so, this charge had cut off the confidence of *Hezekiah*: But how justly may we upbraid many that profess they trust in God, and say, Is not he the God whose name you blaspheme? the God whom you provoke? the God whose truths and waies you neglect and kick against? the God whose servants you oppose? and will you say you trust in God? For shame either disclaim your confidences or be reclaimed from your courses. The man who walks uprightly before God may trust perfectly in God. He that contemns the command, hath no part in the promise. We do not oblige God to do us good by our doing good; but God hath not obliged himself to do us good while we are doing evil. There are promises of grace, but there are no promises of reward to wicked men.

Lastly,

Lastly, Take two characters of holy trust.

First, It takes us off from all other dependences. As a man cannot serve, so neither can he trust God and man together; As in spirituals, so in temporals, while with the Apostle (*Phil. 3. 31.*) *We rejoice* (which is an effect of trust) *in God, we have no confidence in the flesh.* If God be not trusted alone, he is not trusted at all. Every thing we join with him disjoins us from him: He that takes hold of God lets go his hold of all other things: We may use the help of creatures, but we must trust none but God. He that (in this sense) will needs be so wise and provident as to get two strings to his bow, shall find, when he comes to shoot, that he hath not one. If we trust God and man together, God will not help us, and man cannot.

Secondly, Holy trust acts in all estates and turns: *A true obedience respects all the commandments, so true trust respects all the dispensations of God.* Trust reposeth upon God, not only for some, but for, and in every thing. Some say they trust God for pardon, for heaven, and for eternal life, who do not, or think they need not trust him for the needs of this present life: For these, some suppose they can help themselves; and others suspect God will not stoop so low as to help them. *A true Believer depends upon God as much:* (in proportion to the thing) *for a piece of bread, as for heaven;* and the Lord (in proportion to the thing) is as careful to provide Believers with the bread of this life, as he is to give them the bread and means of eternal life. This is trust indeed, when we trust God for all, for temporals as well as for spirituals, in the least as well as in the greatest matters: Yea, the less the thing is for which we trust God, the greater is the grace of trust. As it argues the greatest degree of holiness, when we will not offend God by committing the least sin, and when we are thankful to him for the least mercy; so it argues a great degree of faith, when we depend upon God (being convinced we have need to do so) for his good will in receiving the least comfort, and for his strength in performing the least duty. Some, when they have a great business to undergo, stir up themselves to trust God, and so they ought; but the spiritualness of trust is seen, when in the least businesses we undergo, and in the least duty we go about, we go out of our selves, and go forth in the strength of God. For as it is the very same love of God that saveth us eternally, and preserveth us tempo-

temporally, ſo it is the ſame power of God which doth great or ſmall things for us: and therefore we ſhould in all depend upon God, knowing that without him we cannot do the one, and that we ſhall be able to do all things through him ſtrengthening us. Yea, laſtly, we muſt truſt God in our enjoyments, as well as in our wants. It is an hard thing to ſay, *Though he ſlay me, yet I will truſt in him;* but it is harder to ſay, *Though he make me alive, yet I will truſt in him.* It is a glorious tryal of truſt, to ſay, *Should God make me not worth a goat, yet I will truſt in him;* but it is a greater glory of this truſt, to ſay, *Though God make me worth thouſands, yet I will truſt in him: It is hard to truſt God in a low and troubleſome eſtate, but it is harder to truſt God in a full and prosperous eſtate.* When we (to ſenſe) have the leaſt need of Gods help, then to truſt in him, and depend upon him, ſhews we are moſt ſenſible that we need his help: For by this we in one act give teſtimony to the Al-ſufficiency of God, and to the emptineſs of the creature; by this we make God all, and the creature nothing at all. Faith gives a more ſpiritual diſcovery of it ſelf, when it convinces us that we are poor in the miſt of our abundance without God, then when it convinceth us that we have abundance in God, though we are poor. 'Tis noble when we can ſay, *Though God afflict me and empty me, I will truſt in him;* but 'tis heroically Chriſtian to ſay, *Though God comfort me and fill me, I will truſt in him.* *The ſtronger we are in grace, the leſs we go, either alone, or upon the crutches of the creature.*

While I affirm this, I would not at all derogate from the excellency of *Job's* truſt in God; I only ſhew you a more excellent way of truſting him.

But it may be queſtioned, Doth not *Job* derogate from, yea contradict his own professed truſt, when with the ſame breath with which he concludes, *Though he ſlay me yet will I truſt in him,* he concludeth alſo,

But I will maintain mine own waies before him.

In the former part of the verſe *Job* diſcovered the higheſt confidence in God. In this latter part he ſeems to diſcover ſo much confidence in himſelf, *but I will maintain mine own waies before him.* The Apoſtle argues the inconfiſtency of theſe two (*Rom. II. 6.*) *If by grace, then it is no more of works; otherwiſe*

grace

grace is no more grace, but if it be of works, then it is no more grace, otherwise work is no more work. The waies of a man are his works: if he trust in God he depends on grace. if he maintain his waies he may be said to depend on works. How then shall we reconcile *Jobs* trusting in God with his maintaining of his waies?

I answer, There is a maintaining of our waies before God, which is both a fruit of self-confidence, and an argument of our departure from the grace of God. But this act of *Job* sprang from no such root, nor will it yield any such fruit, as will appear in opening of the words.

But (or nevertheless) I will maintain.

The Original word signifies three things. First, (As we translate) to plead, dispute and maintain a cause, or a position, as just and right. Secondly, To reprove. Thirdly, To correct or amend that which is amiss, faulty and erroneous: And according unto these three significations, the sense of this Scripture may be given three waies. *But I will maintain*

My own waies.

His waies were his works, or the manner and course of his life; which is therefore called our way, because we pass and repass up and down in it, as a man doth in a way to or from his own home.

Before him.

Or, *Before his face*, so the letter of the Hebrew. Which he adds, first, in opposition to men; and secondly, that he might more emphatically set forth the strength of his confidence towards God. *I will maintain my waies before him: I will not only make good what I affirm to those that are like myself, I have not only hope to render myself and my waies fair in the eye of the world; but I am assured that I can render both fair to the eye of God himself.* Some can maintain their waies well enough before men, who cannot maintain them before God: his eyes look through all their coverings and vizards; He can distinguish between appearances and realities; he can see a rotten heart within a painted skin. Holy upright *Job* was not afraid to come into the presence of God, there to open himself, and to have all his waies scanned and examined.

Those

FROM Est
disputare, hinc
arg. disputandi
quon. dialecticis,
verum ab He-
braeis dicitur.
FROM Signifi-
cat etiam: causari
agere apud ju-
dicem, verbum
forensis. Drul.

Those waies had need be fair and well mended which abide the survey of God himself.

I will maintain, &c. That is (according to the first signification of the word) *Though the Lord slay me*, yet I will stand to, and abide my tryal, I will not be brought to an ill opinion of my self, nor will I think the worse of my spiritual, internal estate, how much evil soever the Lord shall be pleased to deal to me in my outward estate: No, I will be as high in pursuance of what I have heretofore asserted, namely, that mine heart is upright with him, and my waies right (in the main) before him, when he is slaying me, as ever I was when he was prospering me, or shall be again if he should prosper me again.

Whence Observe,

First, *An upright heart keeps its grounds in all turns and times.* *Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him;* and not only so, but *I will maintain mine own waies also.* For as an upright heart maintains the same practice of holiness at all times; Though there be slaying and killing for the name and truth of Christ, yet he will not change his way, nor go into a wrong way wherein perhaps he shall have more safety, by complying, and chyming in with the opinions or practices of other men. As he (I say) maintains his waies in regard of his present practice, so also in regard of his former integrity in that practice: which is the thing Job intends chiefly in this assertion.

Secondly, *Job* speaks this, as an argument of his uprightness, *I will maintain mine own waies before him.*

Hence Note,

That it is a sign of a heart sound in holiness when we can with confidence set our selves before God, and maintain what we are in his presence.

It shews that a man is right when he dares come to tryal. I will dispute it out with God himself, saith *Job*: not that he (as I have often shewed before) had an opinion that there was no sin in him, or that God could find no faults in him: *Job* acted upon the principles of the Covenant of grace, and knew upon what ground he went; but (taking that in) he is resolute to maintain his waies, and this was a proof of his uprightness. It is an argument that a piece of gold is weight when a man is willing to have it brought to the balance, and that it is right metal,

not

not counterfeit and baſe, when a man is ready to offer it to the touch-ſtone: Try me, prove me, do what you will with me, bring me to the balance or to the touch-ſtone; I will maintain my waies, I doubt not but I ſhall be found weight and right, faith the upright ſoul (*Job. 3. 21.*) *He that doth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made maniſeſt.* He that doth the truth is not afraid of the light; that will but make his deeds maniſeſt that they are wrought in God, as Chriſt ſpeaks in that place. How are the deeds of a man wrought in God? Firſt, thus, The deeds of the Saints are wrought in God, that is, in the ſtrength and power of God. Secondly, They are wrought in God, that is, at the command, and by the authority of God. They that work in the power of God, and by the rule of God, *their deeds are wrought in God.* Now, he that doth the truth comes to the light, he loves the light, that his deeds may be made maniſeſt, that they are wrought in God, both according to the mind of God, and by the power of God. Our deeds have no value in them, but as they are done in God: nor can we maintain any of our waies before God, but when we walk in God. We may make a flouriſh before men, of what is wrought in man: But what we maintain before God muſt be of God. See how you can put your waies before the light of Gods countenance, and debate them in his preſence. It is an eaſie matter to carry it out with creatures: Conſider what you can do with God. I (*ſaith Job*) *will maintain mine own waies before him.*

Thirdly, *I will maintain my waies*, may ſignifie his reſolution to continue in the waies of holineſs and obedience for the time to come: *Though he ſlay me, yet I will maintain my waies*, that is, I will not be brought out of love with holineſs, though the Lord ſhould lay me under the greateſt diſcouragements: here is another argument of ſincerity. A ſound heart faith, What evil ſoever I find in the waies of God, I will never think ill of the waies of God: No, I will yet walk in them, I will now run in them; how hardly ſoever I am uſed in thoſe waies, I will never out of them, though I meet with Lyons in them, though I meet with blows and troubles in them, yea, though God meet me as a Lyon in them, though I receive blows and troubles from the hand of God himſelf in thoſe waies. I walk, though he ſeem to ſtand there with a drawn ſword to ſlay me, yet *I will maintain my way.*

This is a truth, and true of *Job*, yet I conceive the word in the

*Non tam ad ex-
tes. ſe vita pa-
nitentiam quam
ad ſequens pu-
ritatem perti-
nere exiſti-
mat. Varab.
Aguero v. as
in conſpectu
eius, eſt dare o-
peram ut inno-
center vivat
coram illo.*

Hebrew which we render *maintain*, doth not lead us to it; and therefore (though it hath learned Assertors) I will not stay upon it.

כח significat etiam reprehendere, corrigere; sic aliqui latini exponunt & referunt ad penitentiam de vita antea facta erratis.

Again, Take the word in the second sence, as it signifies to *reprove*, and then the meaning riseth somewhat different from the former, though it comes to the same issue: *I will reprove my own waies*; that is, Though I still assert my sincerity, yet I do not presume my self free from sin: I will judge my self to have failed in many things, and that the Lord might justly correct me, slay me, yea (in regard of the desert of sin) cast me to hell; thus, *I will reprove mine own waies before him*: while God is smiting me, I will be accusing my self, I will say that I have sinned; and that he doth me no wrong: I will not only acquiesce and rest satisfied in the sentence of God upon me, though it be to death, but I will also blame my self for whatsoever is blame-worthy in my heart or life. So then, he intended not any accusation of God, but an examination of himself, or a serious discussion of his course and conscience as in the sight of God.

Hence Observe,

Then when God is smiting or slaying us, we should be judging our selves, and confessing our sinfulness.

I will reprove mine own waies before him. Job did not say, I will reprove his waies, but mine own: He said not, God doth ill in slaying me, but I have often done ill in disobeying him. This is an argument of a holy heart, when in the midst of all sufferings we can acquit God, and lay load upon our selves. The Apostle assureth us (1 Cor. 11. 31.) *If we would judge our selves, we should not be judged of the Lord*: there's one truth: and yet this is as great a truth, *When we are judged of the Lord, we should judge our selves*. When we are corrected of the Lord, we should correct our selves; when he reproveth us, we should reprove our selves, and acknowledge that we are such as in whom God might find enough, not only to lay rods of correction upon us, but even scorpions of destruction. *I also will reprove my waies before him.*

Lastly, Taking the word (as some do) for *correcting*, *I will correct my own waies before him*, so there is this sence in it, *When God is slaying me, I will be thinking how to be more holy, how I may amend my own waies before him*. As if he had said, *I will not do like stubborn and rebellious ones, who when God chastens and afflicts them,*

them, they more pollute and corrupt themselves, or do worse and worse: No, I would be and do better and better, I would correct my waies yet before him: I will not only maintain my waies in holiness, as I have done, but I would put out a more pure and correct edition of my works; I would take care to have all the errata's (which I have observed in any page of my life) amended: and now that the Lord hath cast me into the fire of affliction, I would come out gold, I would have all my dross purged out, and my whole lump refined. These resolves, which the fence of the word now presented holds out unto us, discover also much holiness of heart. What greater discovery of holiness is there, then to make the best improvement of the worst estate, and to be mending our souls while our bodies are a slaying? Yet I conceive (according to the coherence and drift of the place) that our translation renders it most fair, that Job notwithstanding the Lord should slay him, would yet stand up with holy confidence to plead his own integrity, even in the light of God: *I will maintain mine own waies before him.*

But this was not all, Job might possibly be checkt; What? *Maintain your waies?* and that before God? yes do, see what you can get by it, will you plead with God? what will it advantage you? What? saith Job, I fear not any loss by this course, and I hope to be a gainer; I am so far from being startled with these fears, that I am settled in this assurance; what that was he gives in the next verse,

Verse 16. *He also shall be my salvation, for an hypocrite shall not come before him.*

As if he had said, *Never put me this doubt, that God will disclaim me, because I maintain mine own waies before him; nor do I believe that God will damn me because he slayeth me: No, Though he slay me, yet I will trust in him; and though I maintain mine own waies before him, yet he shall be my salvation.*

Some render, *This shall turn to my salvation;* he will not rebuke me, much less condemn me, as he will those who justify themselves proudly, for this shall turn to my salvation; that is, he will be pleased with and accept of me; he will not say it is rashness or folly, pride, or self-conceit which hath stirred me up to maintain my waies, he will rather say it is the integrity and uprightness of my heart, and that I have done no more then I

hoc evadet mihi in salutem. Similes erasis in Deum. Druf.

might, yea, no more then I ought for his glory, being thus charged as I am by you my friends: I do not distrust my cause, though you do; yea, I am seded in this perswasion, that when God hath heard my plea, he will give sentence on my side, though you are my accusers.

He also shall be my salvation.

Salvation is a large word. God is all salvations to his people, and the author of all salvation, of temporal as well as of eternal. Upon whatsoever we can write salvation, we may entitle God to it. *He that is our God is the God of salvation.* (Psal. 68.20.)

But vvhat is the salvation to vvhich *Job* here intitles God?

Sunt qui de futuro accipiunt, erit post mortem, sed ego de presentis tempore accipio. Merc. In salutem esse dicitur non ratione presentis opis sed ratione liberationis ab omnibus malis, & transationis ad beatitudinem. Coc.

Some refer it to temporal salvation. *He also shall be my salvation*, that is, he shall deliver and restore me from my present troubles; though he now slay and quite undo me, yet I believe that he vvill revive and repair me again.

Others interpret it strictly of eternal salvation; *He also shall be my salvation*, that is, though he slay me here, yet I am sure he will save me hereafter, and be my portion for ever. Three reasons rise from the text, vvhy *Job* should here rather be understood of eternal then of temporal salvation.

First, Because he speaks in the next clause about the presence of God, *an hypocrite shall not come before him*: coming before God (in the sence there intended) and salvation are the same; eternal salvation consists in the vision of God, *Psal. 16. 11. In thy presence is fulness of joy.*

Secondly, Because we find *Job* expressing little confidence, but rather much diffidence about any temporal restauration, he gave himself for a lost man as to the riches, honour and greatness of this vvorld. He had better assurance of the glory he never had, then of the greatness he once had.

Thirdly, Because he speaks here upon supposition of his being slain; take slaying strictly, for the separating of soul and body, and he that is so slain is beyond temporal salvation. For these three reasons we may conceive *Job* here aiming at and reaching after eternal salvation.

He also shall be my salvation.

Some connecting this clause vvith that sence of the former, *I will reprove my one waies*, give the Observation thus,

While

While we reprove our selves, and confess our sins, our hearts may be raised up in confidence of the favour of God in the pardon of our sins.

He doth not say, If I reprove mine own waies God will reprove me too. There are some reprovings of our hearts, from which we may infer, that God will reprove us much more: so 1 Joh. 3. 20. *If our heart condemn us, God is greater then our hearts, and knoweth all things.* 'Tis so, when the heart is engaged to any lust: when such a mans heart condemns him, God will condemn him a thousand times more: a man continuing in sin cannot say upon good ground, I reprove my waies, yet God shall be my salvation; yea, while such reprove themselves they may be sure God will reprove them also. Only, when we humbly acknowledge the sinfulness of our waies, and forsake them, we are assured of mercy. These, and none but these have warrant from the word to say salvation belongs to them.

Prov. 28. 13. He that covereth his sins shall not prosper, but whose confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy. (1 Joh. 1. 9.) *If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins:* To confess sin is self-condemnation: God is so gracious that he will not condemn, so faithful and just that he will forgive those that confess. While vve implead our selves, God will not be our Judge, but Christ will be our Advocate; hence that Gospel-prophet encourageth drooping souls (*Isa. 43. 16.*) *Declare, that thou maist be justified;* Declare, what should he declare? Declare thine iniquity, and thou shalt be justified from all thine iniquities. The Lord also will be thy salvation.

Secondly, Take the former clause according to our reading, *I will maintain my own waies before him;* He also shall be my salvation. From this connexion Observe.

There is a self-justification consistent with salvation.

Christ chargeth the Pharisees (*Luk. 16. 15.*) *Ye are they which justify your selves before men, but God-knoweth your hearts.* That is, you bear up and pride your selves with this, that men know no ill by you, that no man can say, *black is your eye,* but God can see *black is your heart.* They who rest in a justification before men while their hearts are naught, are condemned before God. And all who justify themselves before God upon the goodness of their works shall be condemned. But though we may not justify our selves upon the goodness of our works, yet they (whose works.

*Quamvis ad-
versum me co-
ram Deo vias
meas tanquam
malas arguo,
scio tamen quod
sententiam in
mei favorem
pronunciaturus
sit. Bold.*

works are so) may justifie themselves that their works are good; 'Tis not pride, but duty (when we are called to it) to say we are what we are, and to maintain that our waies are right, when they are right. God takes it well at our hands if we speak the most (with truth) of our selves, when others speak less then truth, or that which is not true, of us. Self-commendation is alwaies not only uncomely, but sinful; except it come under the notion of self-vindication, or of such a self-justification as this point leads unto. Thus we may maintain our waies before men: yea, thus (while we put our mouths in the dust, and are deeply humbled before God for the imperfections of our waies) we may maintain the uprightness of our waies before God, and be assured that he also will be our salvation.

Further, Take the words in their own compass, and we may Observe,

First, *God is the salvation of his people.*

How often do the Saints breathe out this faith, *He is our salvation!* upon this faith they live, and in this faith they die, *That God is their salvation.*

Secondly, Observe,

A thought that God is salvation to us, is consolation enough to us.

Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him; he also shall be my salvation. When Jacob lay upon his death-bed, panting and gasping for life, O God (saith he) *I have waited for thy salvation.* He could not go on blessing his sons, but he must make a parenthesis, to take a view or get a taste of this salvation. To reflect upon our interest in the salvation of God is light to us in darkness, and life to us in the approaches of death. To be saved by any hand carries comfort in it, much more to be saved by the hand of God: but the comfort of the Saints is yet higher; God is their salvation. We are happy enough that God saves us, but we have a further happiness, in that God is our salvation: *If God be our salvation, we are not only as safe, but (according to our measure and receptibility) as happy as God himself is.*

Thirdly, Job speaks emphatically, *He also;* he cries up the Name of God. And in this open affirmation that God is his salvation, there is a secret negation or a denial implied that salvation is in any else: As if he had said, *he, and he only; he, and none but he.*

The point from it is, *That none but God is able so give salvation to his people.*

Salvation belongeth unto the Lord (*Psal. 3. 8.*) The Hebrew is, *salvation unto the Lord.* Salvation is so much his, that the holy Ghost puts nothing between it and him. We supply the fence well, *Salvation belongeth unto the Lord.* And it doth not belong unto him in common with others, *'tis his property*: He gives it and none else can (*Isa. 43. 11.*) *I, even I, am the Lord, and beside me there is no Saviour.* No? we find in the book of Judges, that God raised up *Saviours* to his people (*Judg. 9. 27.*) True; but, first, He never raised up any Saviour for eternal salvation but only Jesus Christ, who is also God. Secondly, They who were *temporal saviours* did not save in their own strength, and by their own power; God is said to raise them up *Saviours*, because he raised up such instruments as himself intended to save them by; it was God that saved them, though men were employed to save them; *Whoever brings us salvation, God is the Author of it.* The Prophet concludes (*Jer. 3. 23.*) *Truly in vain is salvation hoped for from the hills, and from the multitude of mountains.* He speaks but of temporal salvation, and by hills and mountains he means the greatest means, the highest helps, the strongest hands, the wisest heads on earth, and yet he saith, *In vain is salvation hoped for from the hills and mountains*; truly God is the help of his people. It is much more vain to expect eternal salvation from any other, in vain is *soul-salvation* hoped for from hills or from the multitude of mountains, from this good work, or that good work, from hills and mountains of good works; though you pile up mountains of prayers, hills of alms, and deeds of charity, yea, though you dig the lowest valleys of humiliation, and make rivers and seas of tears with weeping, yet in vain is eternal salvation hoped for from these hills and mountains, from these valleys and seas, *Salvation is of the Lord; He also shall be my salvation.*

When Job had said, *I will maintain mine own waies before him,* Doth he say, *and they shall be my salvation*? Doth he say, my righteousness, my integrity, shall be my salvation? His waies were indeed the way to salvation. but his waies were not, nor did he intend them to be his *salvation*. The uprightness of our hearts, the righteousness of our waies cannot save us, Christ only is our salvation. How much soever we maintain or may be compelled

compelled (as *Job* was) to boast of our waies, yet we cannot make salvation of them, we must give that wholly to God. It is an admirable frame of heart, when we are highest in speaking for our selves or in maintaining our waies before God and man, yet then to go quite out of our waies and out of our selves. To expect all from free grace, when we have been most free at works, most active in doing, or patient in suffering for God, is the right Gospel temper.

Fourthly, Observe this from it.

That an upright heart in the worst times looks at, and hath an eye upon the best things.

Though he slay me, he shall be my salvation: With the same breath he tels us of God slaying him, and of God his salvation; he saw life in death, light in darkness, deliverances in destruction, repairs in ruine, salvation in slaying, such are the workings of a gracious heart, such the prospects of faith in the gloomiest day, in the darkest night. Faith only sees such sights as these reflected from the glass of precious promises.

Lastly, *Job* expelleth his special interest in, or relation to God, *He also shall be my salvation.*

Hence Observe,

That a Believer looks upon God himself as his salvation.

My God, my salvation. God hath (as it were) made himself over to Believers: *Job* doth not say, God will give or bestow salvation upon me; but he saith, *He shall be my salvation.* It is God himself who is the salvation and the portion of his people. *They would not much care for salvation if God were not their salvation.* It more pleaseth the Saints that they enjoy God, then that they enjoy salvation. False and carnal spirits will express a great deal of desire after salvation; O they like salvation, heaven and glory well, but they never express any longing desire after God and Jesus Christ. They love salvation, but they care not for a Saviour. Now, that which faith pitcheth most upon, is God himself; he shall be my salvation, let me have him and there's salvation enough; *He is my life, he is my comfort, he is my riches, he is my honour, and he is my all.* Thus *David's* heart acted immediately upon God, *Psal. 18. 1, 2. I love thee, O Lord, my strength, the Lord is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer, my buckler and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower.* It pleased holy *David* more, that God was his strength, then that

that God gave him strength, that God was his deliverer, then that he was delivered, that God was his fortress, his buckler, his horn, his high tower, then that he gave him the effect of all these: It pleased *David*, and it pleases all the Saints more, that God is their salvation (whether temporal or eternal) then that he saves them. The Saints look more at God then at all that is Gods. They say (*Non tua, sed tu*) *we desire not thine, but thee*, or nothing of thine like thee. *Whom have I in heaven but thee?* saith *David* again (*Psal. 73. 25.*) What are Saints? What are Angels to a soul without God? 'tis true of things as well as of persons, What have we in heaven but God? What's joy without God? What's glory without God? What's all the furniture and riches, all the delicates, yea, and all the diadems of heaven, without the God of heaven? If God should say to the Saints, here is heaven, take it amongst you, but I will withdraw my self, how would they weep over heaven it self, and make it a *Baca*, a valley of tears indeed! *Heaven is not heaven unless we enjoy God.* 'Tis the presence of God which makes heaven: *Glorie is but our nearest being unto God.* As *Mephibosheth* replied, when *David* told him, *I have said, then and Ziba divide the land: Let him take all if he will*, saith *Mephibosheth*, I do not so much regard the land, as I regard thy presence; *Let him take all, for as much as my Lord the King is come again in peace to his own house, where I may enjoy him.* So, if God should say to the Saints, take heaven amongst you, and withdraw himself, they would even say, Nay, let the world take heaven if they will, let them take glory if they will, if we may not have thee in heaven, heaven would be but an earth, or rather but a hell to us. That which Saints rejoyce in, is, that they may be in the presence of God, that they may sit at his table, and eat bread with him, that is, that they may be near him continually, which was *Mephibosheth* his priviledge with *David*. That's the thing, say they, which they desire, and which their souls thirst after; that's the wine they would drink. *My soul* (saith *David*, *Psal. 42. 2.*) *thirsteth for God, for the living God, when (me thinks the time is very long, when) shall I come and appear before God?* He spake this in the greatness and heat of his zeal to enjoy God in the Ordinances of his publick worship: How much more was his soul on fire to enjoy God where he should be above Ordinances? The usual saying of Christians is, *Come, let us go to prayer, or let us go to Church; we should rather*

say, *Come, let us go to God.* We should prize duties no further then as we obey and enjoy God in doing them: Nor should we prize heaven it self further then as we shall have there a more full and perfect enjoyment of God. *Salvation it self were no salvation without the God of salvation.* He also shall be my salvation,

But an hypocrite shall not come before him.

In this later clause Job secretly refuteth the censure of his friends, who had aspersed him as an hypocrite. Bildad did it in the 8th chapter, though not directly, by way of assertion, yet obliquely, by way of inference, while he said (ver. 13.) *The hypocrites hope shall perish and be cut off, and his trust shall be as a spiders web.* Here Job speaks that out, which no hypocrite can, *I (saith he) will maintain my waies before God, and he shall be my salvation:* 'Tis not so with hypocrites, they dare not maintain their waies before God, or if they do, they shall yet fall under the condemnation of God: Thus by way of argument, he denieth, as they by way of argument had affirmed him to be an hypocrite. Job could come where no hypocrite can.

Audeo coram
Deo apparere,
quod non fac-
rem si impius
& hypocrita
essem ut vos me
esse dicitis. Mer.

Non veniet in
conspetu eius
omnis hypocrita
Heb.

Non omnis, in
sacro sermone
sape valet
nullus.

Hypocrita
Græcis est
quod Latini
histrio, Larva-
tus nimirum
homo, qui aliud
ipse est, & aliud
se esse simu-
lat. Sanct.

Flagitiosus.
Vatab. Impius.
Pago.

Coram Deo do-
lus non ingre-
ditur. Sept.

An hypocrite shall not come before him.

The Hebrew is, *All hypocrites shall not come before him, that is, No hypocrite shall come before him.* Not all, is often in Scripture put for none, or none at all. David (Psal. 47. 17.) saith of the worldly rich man, *When he dieth he shall carry nothing away with him:* the Hebrew is, *When he dieth he shall not carry all away with him.* The meaning is (as we translate) he shall carry nothing at all away, he shall not carry so much as a rag away with him. So the Apostle speaks (Rom. 3. 20.) *By the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in thy sight:* the Greek is, *All flesh shall not be justified in thy sight, by the deeds of the law:* the meaning is, none shall. So here, *All hypocrites,* that is, *No hypocrite.* I have opened something about him at the 8th chapter, and shewed there what an hypocrite is; he is one that acts another mans part, he acts a person which he is not. *An hypocrite is a wicked man in a godly mans cloaths.*

Some translate by a general word, *A wicked man shall not come before him:* Others render, *An acceptor of persons shall not come before him;* he taxed his friends as such before. Two or three

three of the Rabbins (though they are ſomewhat hard put to it, ^{Heb. vocis ſig-}
to make out that ſence of the word) are much for the later, ^{nificatiōem} *An acceptor of perſons ſhall not come before him.* We render it ſtrictly ^{aggreſtere vide-}
according to the proper ſignification of the word ; yet to ſay a ^{ſur. Rab. Mord.}
Wicked man or an acceptor of perſons ſhall not come before him, ^{in lib. Rad.}
is as much as to ſay, an hypocrite ſhall not come before him :
For though all wicked men, all acceptor of perſons are not hy-
pocrites (ſome ſin and care not who ſees, they ſin in the very
face of the ſun, and *the ſhew of their faces* (as the Prophet ſpeaks)
doth reſiſte againſt them.) But (I ſay) though poſſibly ſome
wicked men (at leaſt in ſome things) are no hypocrites, yet
there is no hypocrite, but he is a wicked man ; therefore we ſhall
not call either of them out of his name, though we give both or
either of the names to each of them : and as their titles, ſo their
eſtates are alike, we may as well ſay, *A wicked man*, as *An hy-*
po-crite

Shall not come before him.

Not come before him ? Whether can they go, or where can ^{Phraſis Hebra-}
they be behind him ^{whoſe face is every where} ? I anſwer, *To come* ^{ica idem eſt ac}
before God, may be underſtood either of this life or of the life to
come. We come before God in this life, while we attend the
duties and ordinances of his worſhip. But it may be ſaid: Do
not hypocrites come thus before God ? none come more before
God in that ſence than hypocrites ; and herein lies their hypo-
criſie chiefly, that they come before God in outward holy du-
ties, and yet are ſo unholy in their lives, or at thoſe duties. The
Lord ſpeaks complainingly of ſuch an hypocritical people preſ-
ſing upon him (*Iſa. 58. 2.*) *This people ſeek me daily, they take*
delight in approaching to God : Yet all this was only as a nation that
did righteouſneſs, they were not really a righteous nation. In
another Prophet (*Jer. 7. 10.*) the Lord reproveth hypocrites
openly, and in terms for coming before him, *Will ye ſteal, murder,*
and commit adultery, and ſwear falſly, &c. and come and ſtand
before me in this houſe ? They came ſo much before God, that he
was put to chide them out of his preſence, he could ſcarce ſtave
them off. How then is it that *Job* ſaith, *An hypocrite ſhall not*
come before him, if we underſtand it of this preſent life ?

I anſwer, He comes not ſo before God ; firſt, in regard of right,
ſecondly, in regard of acceptance. An hypocrite hath no right

to come before God in any duty, he cannot call God father, he cannot lay claim to any promise of the covenant; or if he do, he shall not be accepted, much less suffered to see God as his salvation. Thus an hypocrite shall not come before God in this present life, though he appear often personally before him.

Secondly, He shall not come before God in the life to come, to enjoy, or joy in his presence; he shall not see God to his comfort, but to his torment; he shall only see God as a Judge to be condemned by him, and thus he would not see him: he shall be driven to the tribunal or judgement-seat of God, but he shall not stand in judgement.

There are four expressions in Scripture, which gradually set forth the rejection of wicked men from the presence of God.

*Non veniet
in conspectu e-
jus ut videat
ipsum Deum in
quo ultima sa-
lus hominum
consistet, veni-
et tamen in
conspectu ejus
judicandus..*
Aquin.

First, They shall not be admitted entrance, *Rev. 21. 17. chap. 22. 14. There shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, nor what soever worketh or maketh a lie, that is, unholly ones shall not so much as set one foot over the threshold of that holy city. He speaks thus (Isa. 59. 14.) in another case, Equity cannot enter. It was a time wherein equity was so far from having due respect and entertainment, that justice could not so much as get in a doors: Equity cannot enter. The wicked shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven, they shall not have the least admittance.*

Secondly, The Scripture saith, wicked men shall not stand in the presence of God (*Psal. 53. The foolish shall not stand in thy sight.* David treateth there much upon the same argument that Job doth; for after he had spoken of his own acceptance with God, he adds, in a way of opposition, *the foolish shall not stand in thy sight*; though possibly he may enter, yet he shall not stand there.

Thirdly, The Scripture saith they shall not dwell with God (*Psal. 5. 4. Evil shall not dwell with thee, that is, evil men shall not, though they should be admitted entrance, though they should be suffered to stand a while before God, yet they shall not dwell with God, they shall presently pass away.*

The fourth expression, is that in the text, which comes between the first and second, between entering and standing, that is, *coming before God; an hypocrite shall not come before him, that is, God will not have any thing to do with him in a way of favour. Thus he is excluded totally, he shall not enter, saith one Scripture; if he doth, he shall not come before God, saith another;*

ther; if he come before God, yet he shall not stand in his sight, sixth a third; if he stand, yet he shall not dwell with God, saith a fourth. I might add a fifth, which saith, *He shall not inherit the kingdom of God* (1 Cor. 6. 9.) Now, in opposition to all these, the upright and holy are admitted, they have entrance into the house of God, they come before God, they stand in his sight, they dwell with him for ever, yea, they shall not only dwell as servants, or as friends, but as sons, as his first born, as heirs, all they shall inherit the kingdom of God. One of the highest privileges promised unto *Sion* is, that a time shall come when the wicked shall not come unto her (Isa. 52. 1.) *Awake, awake, put on thy strength, O Zion; put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city.* Wherefore must *Jerusalem*, the holy city, awake thus, and be ready in her dress, in her beautiful garments? Why, there is good news for her, *For henceforth there shall no more come into thee the uncircumcised and the unclean:* As if he had said, *In times of Sions desolation or oppression, when there was no due reformation of worship, nor order among worshippers; then the uncircumcised and the unclean came and stood, yea, even dwelt with thee, as thy own children; but, O Jerusalem, a time shall come when the uncircumcised and the unclean shall not so much as come into thee, they shall be rejected and cast out for ever.* Prophane ones shall find no place at last in *Sion* here below, and hypocrites shall never come into the *Sion* which is above. Some hypocrites will come into the Church when she is most refined, there is no keeping of them out, till they discover themselves, and so are cast out, or apostatize, and so go out of themselves. Possibly the Church militant may be so purged and reformed at last, that as there shall be no prophane in her, so but a few hypocrites. But into the Church triumphant, we are sure the closest hypocrite shall not enter: God will wash off all the varnish and paint which they have put upon the face of their profession with rivers of brimstone, and will give them the cup of his fierce wrath to drink unto eternity.

Hence Observe,

First, *Hypocrites are the worst of wicked men.*

Every wicked man is not bad enough to be called an hypocrite. Hypocrites are the chief of sinners, not only the children, but the first-born of the Devil. We may wrong a wicked man by calling him an hypocrite, but we cannot wrong any hypocrite by

by thinking him all that's wicked. The Moralist saith, *when you have said, a man is ungrateful, you have said all that is ill of him.* I am sure when we have said a man is an hypocrite, we have said all that's ill of him, and have called him, not only (as we say) *all so naughty, but all that's naughty.* To do wickedly, or to be wicked is bad enough; but to do wickedness under pretence of goodness, or for a man whose heart tells him he is wicked, to pretend to goodness, this is abominable. An hypocrite is not worse than other wicked men, because he alwaies hath more sin than they, but because he hides his sin: Nor doth the greatness of his sin lie simply in this, because he hides how sinful he is, but because he appears holy, which he is not; that he seems to be good is worse then his being really bad. That satan is the *prince of darkness*, speaks not so much ill of him, as this, that *he transforms himself into an Angel of light.* An hypocrite never doth good out of love to God, but out of design for himself. He thinks he can impose upon God, and mock him as one man mocks another, he makes God an idol, as if he had eyes and could not see, or had no eyes to see his waies, nor understanding to search into his heart. And to shew that hypocrites are the worst of sinners they are sentenced to the worst of punishments. *An hypocrite shall not come before him,* saith Job here, how great a punishment that is, will appear in the next obsevation. When Christ would express the sorest judgment upon any sort of sinners, he tells them they *shall have their portion with hypocrites and unbelievers,* (Mat. 24. 51.) implying that the judgement passed upon hypocrites is the most dreadful judgement. Now, if the judgement of an hypocrite be the greatest judgment, then the sin of an hypocrite is the greatest sin; for the justice of God takes the measure of punishment by the measure of sin. As every sin deserves punishment, so ever, where the punishment is greater, the sin is greater, either in the matter, or in the circumstances of it. Hypocrites are (as one glosseth this text in *Matthieu*) the free-holders of hell, other sinners are but as inmates with them, and have but a portion of their misery. Now, as that by which other things are proportioned and measured is a perfect measure, and that by which other things are weighed is a perfect weight in its kind: so that by which the greatest misery is weighed and measured, is the most perfect misery in its degree; Seeing then the weight and measure of that misery which rests upon an hypocrite is, used

by God himſelf to weigh and meſure out the miſery of thoſe who ſhall have the greateſt miſery, therefore the miſery of an hypocrite is the greateſt, which clearly argues what is here aſſerted, that his ſin is alſo greateſt.

Secondly, Conſider i. v what the puniſhment of the hypocrite doth conſiſt: *Job* doth not ſay, *an hypocrite ſhall be caſt to hell*, and tormented in that lake with fire and brimſtone (which yet other Scriptures ſay) but here *Job* ſaith only, *an hypocrite ſhall not come before him*. (He ſhall be baniſhed out of the preſence of God.) This is his puniſhment.

Hence Obſerve,

That, the puniſhment of loſs is a very great puniſhment, one of the greateſt if not the greateſt puniſhment. Sinful man falls under a twofold puniſhment, 1. of loſs, 2. of ſenſe. Many diſpute which of theſe is the greateſt, and moſt determine that the puniſhment of loſs is greater then that of ſenſe. This is the puniſhment of an hypocrite, *he ſhall not come before God*. This loſs is a great puniſhment in this life: not to enjoy God by faith in Ordinances, promiſes and diſpenſations, is the great miſery of man, hypocrites are denied this enjoyment. For though they come before God (as I ſaid before) and preſs into his preſence, to worſhip him, though they challenge the promiſes, and are apt to flatter themſelves that God is with them in providential diſpenſations, yet they have no acceptance with him. God denyeth them his preſence: they come to God, but God doth not come to them, though they talk of the covenant and lay hold of it, yet it is with a falſe finger, and God reproves them for their boldneſs and uſurpations (*Pſal. 50. 16.*) *Unto the wicked God ſaith, what haſt thou ſo dare declare my ſtatutes, or that thou ſhouldeſt take my covenant into thy mouth, ſeeing thou hateſt inſtruction and caſteſt my words behind thee?* I grant, an hypocrite may have ſome ſluſhes of the preſence of God in Ordinances and duties, and that's his heaven. This the Apoſtle calls his *taste of the good word of God, and of the powers of the world to come* (*Heb. 6. 5.*) he may have ſome raiſings, yea, ſuppoſed raviſhings of Spirit at the report and ſight of heavenly things: but his taſte of theſe is not ſpiritual, but ſenſitive only, ſuch as the underſtanding gives in to the affections upon any rational diſcourſe or demonſtration of objects pleaſing to the nature of man: any higher enjoyment of God then this the hypocrite taſteth not. And uſually he prayeth, and heareth with-

out

out any sence of these. He doth nothing with God, while he hath to do with him : and here is his punishment, though he be not sensible of it now, but he shall be sensible of it in the life to come. As he shall not come before God for ever, so he shall know the meaning of it, what it is not to come before him. Carnal men lightly esteem the presence and enjoyment of God, yea, they are glad when they are out of his presence. Few know when God is near them or when he is far off, what his departures mean, or what his returnings. They who know these things, count his presence their greatest gain, and his absence their greatest loss. When God sentenced *Cain* for the murdering of his brother, he complains chiefly of this (*Gen. 4. 14.*) *Thou hast driven me out this day from thy face, or from thy presence.* And what was that ? It was but the common presence of God in ordinances. *Cain* had been offering sacrifice, and God did not accept him; he could not go from the universal presence of God, and he was not at all admitted to his comfortable presence, yet he looked upon it as his greatest misery, that he was deprived of his common presence in public worship, from which he was as a person excommunicated, *I am driven out from thy face* : When *Saul* could not get an answer from God, neither by dreams, nor by urim, nor by prophets. This he represents as the worst of his afflictions (*1 Sam. 28.*) To be shut out from the sight or society of a man whom we much esteem, is exceeding afflictive. Though *Absalom* was reconciled to *David* his father, so far as to be admitted to come to the city, yet because *David* gave order that *Absalom* should not see his face, nor come to court, he could not bear it, but resents this restraint so passionately, that he sends to *Joab*, and bespeaks him thus: *Wherefore am I come from Geshur ? It had been good for me to have been there still; now therefore let me see the Kings face, and if there be any iniquity in me let him kill me* (*2 Sam. 14. 24. 34.*) as if he had said, I cannot satisfie my self with my liberty in *Jerusalem*, if I stand excluded from the Kings presence. I had rather die then endure this piece of banishment. How then will hypocrites be tormented with an eternal banishment from the face of God ! It is the greatest tryal that the Saints have in this life, when they lose the sight of God by faith, when they come before God, and cannot find God, when God covers himself with a cloud (as the Church complains) that they cannot come at him, that is the hardest exercise of the Saints in this life. And O how they are

are refreshed, when God returns and comes in to their spirits, when he sheds his love abroad into their hearts by the holy Ghost. This is heaven upon earth; and of this they say, as the Disciples at the transfiguration of Christ upon the mount (*Mat. 17.*) *It is good to be here.* When the Lord Jesus perceived a vail drawn between him and his father, and that (while he was suffering for the sin, and by the malice and wrath of man) he suffered also an eclipse (though he knew it was not a total one, and would be but a short one) of the light of his Fathers face, how did he cry out (who never shrunk nor opened his mouth at the scourges and crown of thorns, at the spittings and buffetings, at the nails and spear which tortured his blessed body, how did he cry out, I say,) at this short desertion, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* (*Matth. 27. 46.*) Hence take a scantling of those torments which shall vex hypocrites in hell, who shall be made to know fully (which they have here slighted) what the comfortable presence of God means, and yet shall see themselves shut out from it, without the least hope of any enjoyment. And that which will make the suffering of this loss most torturing and insufferable, is, that they shall ever be thinking of it. If a man could forget his losses, how great soever they are, they would be only a private evil to him, not an afflictive evil; but to be ever thinking of our losses, is to us worse than the loss it self. Now, wicked men shall ever be poring upon the loss of heaven in hell, and casting up the sum of it, though they cannot exactly make out the sum. This will be the sting of all their sorrows, and the very head of that poyson'd arrow which shall drink up their spirits. And this arises two waies, first, from the very conduct of nature, which alwaies leads our thoughts to, and fastens them upon our losses. As where the pain is, there we point with the finger; so where the loss is, there we dwell with our thoughts. Secondly, This arises inevitably from the justice of God, who having prepared this as the hypocrites punishment, will irresistably hold his thoughts and his loss together; so that it shall not be in his power to lay them aside or suspend them for one moment. From all these considerations let the hypocrite understand the terrour of this sentence, that he shall not come before God.

If any shall object, How can hypocrites be said to lose this presence of God, seeing they never enjoyed it?

I answer, We may be said to lose a thing three waies. 1. As having had and possessed it before; thus hypocrites do not lose the presence of God. 2. We may be said to lose that which hath been offered and tendered to our enjoyment: and 3. That which we have hoped to enjoy: In these two later senses, hypocrites lose the presence of God, together with all the blessed concomitants of it. For salvation hath been offered unto them, and they have professed, yea, possibly, they have had strong hopes that they should be saved. Whence else is that challenge of admittance (*Matth. 7. 22.*) *Many shall say unto me in this day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name, &c. to whom Christ will profess, I never knew you, depart from me ye workers of iniquity.*

Again, *An hypocrite shall not come before him;* Then, who shall come before him? Take the answer to this question, from the mouth of Christ himself (*Matth. 5. 8.*) *Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.* And the Apostle's negative, *Without holiness no man shall see the Lord,* may be resolved into this affirmative, *Holy ones shall see the Lord, the holy ones;* they see God here in a glass darkly, and they shall see him face to face clearly in heaven. The reason why we see so little of God in the glass of Ordinances and promises, is because there is so much unholiness in our hearts: The hypocrite cannot see him at all; and the sincere cannot see much of him, because remaining corruption stands between God and them hindring their sight. When we shall see God as he is, we shall be like him; and as we grow now to a clearer sight of him, we shall also grow into a fuller likeness with him.

Lastly, *For as much as an hypocrite shall not come before him,* We learn,

That there is no coming before God without Christ.

The reason why an hypocrite shall not come before God, is because he cannot bring Christ with him, he comes in his own name, and therefore receives nothing from God but frowns or a command to depart and be gone. Through Christ we have access with boldness to the throne of grace, and we may speak to God as to a friend: but they who come boldly before God without Christ, come presumptuously, not believingly; and shall find, that fool-hardiness, not faith, hath asked them up to such a confidence. *For as no man can come unto Christ, except the Father*

Father draw him, so none can come unto the Father unless Christ bring him. Christ takes his people (as it were) by the hand, and leads them unto his Fathers throne. As when a poor suiter comes to present some request to a great King, he (possibly) dares not come near, till the favourite, or some eminent officer of the Court brings him up. 'Tis so here; but as for the hypocrite he may stay long enough at the door, before Christ vouchsafe to bring him to his Father; and if he shall be so impudent as to come alone, Christ will quickly turn him back. Man cannot come immediately before God: the hypocrite is out of the Mediator, and therefore an hypocrite shall not come before him.

Job Chap. 13. Vers. 17, 18, 19.

Hear diligently my speech, and my declaration with your ears.

Behold now, I have ordered my cause, I know that I shall be justified.

Who is he that will plead with me? for now if I hold my tongue, I shall give up the ghost.

Job had made his preface, and called for attention, at the 6th verse of this chapter. *Hear now my reasoning, and hearken to the pleadings of my lips.* Having spoken a little, he makes a new preface, and again calls up their attention, *Hear diligently my speech, and my declaration with your ears.*

There are two parts in this second preface.

In the first, he requireth a fair hearing from his friends, which, with some interpositions of his growing confidence, is contained in these three verses.

In the second, he desireth a fair hearing from God, *vers. 20, 21, 22.*

In this part of the preface directed to his friends, he calls for attention in general, at the 17th verse, *Hear diligently my speech.* And shews a two-fold ground of it, *vers. 18, 19.*

First, From the goodness of his cause, and the clearness of his conscience, at the 18th verse, *Behold now, I have ordered my*

cause, I know that I shall be justified. A man that is sure he hath a good cause, cares not who hears it, only he would have it well heard.

Secondly, He giveth another ground from his own necessity, he must be heard he shall die else; in the later part of the 19th verse, *Who is he that will plead with me? for if now I hold my tongue, I shall give up the ghost.*

Hear diligently my speech.

Job had found his friends unequal hearers, and therefore he begs a better hearing; and to prepare their attention for it, he laies about him (as we use to say) thick and threefold, *Hear diligently my speech, and my declaration with your ears.*

Hear diligently.

Audiendo au-
dite. Attentionem ab iis non
qualemcumq; sed
maximam effla-
gitat.

The Hebrew is, *Hearing, hear*, that is, *Be sure you hear when you hear.* As it he had said, *It is not any kind of attention which will serve my cause, you must give attentive diligence and diligent attention to my words.* The doubling of the word imports two things, either first, that his friends were unwilling to hear; or secondly, that what he had to speak was of very great importance, such as might justly command a double hearing. *Hear diligently my speech,*

And my declaration.

Enigmata.
Vulg.

מִתִּין
א מִתִּין

Patescit, ostendit, quæ significatio est omnino contraria enigmati, indicationem planam & minimè ambiguum denotans.

The Vulgar reads it, *My dark speeches*: But there is no light at all in the Original, leading them to translate *dark speeches*. They say it is because Job speaks about a difficult point, or the riddles of providence, shewing how the Lord had afflicted the innocent, and yet is himself just. These indeed are *hard sayings, dark speeches*, and we may grant that there is a darkness in the matter, a depth and a mysteriousness in what he was about to speak. But Job's design was to speak plain, not in parables; to speak in the sun, not in the clouds. And the Hebrew word, in its native importance, is to open or explain, to set a thing forth in lively colours: Which signification is altogether inconsistent with that of the Vulgar, which reads, *Hear my riddle, or my dark speech.* Besides, the word [declaration] signifies a grave and a weighty speech, a speech which is not froth'd out with light words, nor wrapt up in obscure meanings, but is bottomed upon reason,

reason, and ordered with the clearness of discretion. Further, the word (*declaration*) is conceived to be a *law term*, for he speaks afterwards of pleading, *who will plead with me* I will make my declaration. In law suits the Plaintiff puts in a declaration of his grievance: so saith Job, *Hear now my speech, and my declaration with your ears*. I am at the bar, let my declaration be read for the opening of my cause.

With your ears.

The ear is the Organ of hearing, and that only we have nothing to hear with but the ear; why then doth he say, *hear my declaration with your ears*? when if they heard it at all, they must hear it with their ears. I answer, This is but an enforcement of what he said before, *hear diligently*, that is, *hear with your ears*, be sure you hear, let your ear to work upon it, take heed how you hear, or, in hearing be sure you hearken. So in the new Testament often, *be that hath an ear to hear let him hear*, which is as much as this, let him hear with his ears, that is, let the ear do its work, and not be idle. Every man that hath ears hath not an ear to hear. Most are like the Idols of the heathen, who have ears, but hear not. All ears are shut till Christ bores them to a saving hearing of the word. Till the heart be opened the ear is deaf, and cannot hear to purpose. Further, take this rule. *It is a beightning of the sense of what we say, when we put the Organ and the act together, and joyn them which cannot be severed*. So, when we hear one say, *I saw it with mine eyes*, we know he could not see but with his eyes; yet thus he speaks to note the certainty and clearness of the sight he had of such a thing. And thus, *I heard it with mine ears*, I heard it certainly, fully, and attentively. Such is the meaning of Job in this admonition to his friends, *hear diligently, my speech, and my declaration with your ears*.

Hence. (considering the state of Job when he called for this hearing) Observe,

That a man in affliction desires to be heard with much attention.

He that can hardly speak for attending upon his own pains, would fain have others attend to his speech; he would not have his words lost when they come drenched and bedewed with his own tears and blood. The affliction of others should move us to hear them, and they that are in affliction will be sure to put it as a motive why they should be heard. And that's one reason why times of affliction are such special seasons of prayer to God:

Is any among you afflicted? let him pray, Jam. 5. 13. As he hath reason to pray then, because of his own need, so he hath an encouragement to pray then, because he may have stronger hopes to speed. God hears at all times with his ears when we pray with our hearts, but his ear is quickest, when our wants are sharpest. Afflictions do sometimes hinder us from hearing counsel, yea, afflictions hinder some from hearing comforts (*Exod. 6. 9.*) And Moses spake so unto the children of Israel (what spake he? Not the law which called them to obedience, but a promise which called them out of bondage;) but they hearkned not unto Moses for anguish (or straightness) of spirit, and for cruel bondage. Their bondage suffered them not to hear of their deliverance out of bondage. But though affliction hinders many from hearing both counsel and comfort, yet they who are in affliction think all bound to hear their complaints.

Secondly, In that Job calls so often for attention^s (for I told you this was his second preface: at the 6th verse he bids them hear and hearken, now he bids them hear again.)

Hence Observe,

They who are at ease themselves are seldome so sensible as they ought of those that are in misery;

Their pains, their prayers, their tears, are not laid to heart as they ought. The ground upon which the Apostle assures the Saints that they shall be heard when they cry to Christ, when they make declarations of their miseries and sorrows before his throne, is, his sensibleness of their sorrows, (*Heb. 4. 13.*) *We have not an high Priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin:* Christ was under temptations, he feelth ours, because he had many of his own to feel. But they who never had experience of sorrows know not how to hear, especially not how to hear diligently the cries of those that are in sorrow. See more of this at the fifth verse of the twelfth chapter. Here I shall only add, that there are two sorts of men who are ill hearers. First, Such as enjoy worldly pleasures and contentments to the full, Secondly, They who are over-full or intangled with worldly cares and businesses: both these are very ill hearers. And hence I conceive that Proverb^s (among us) hath its original, when a servant, or any other we have to do with, regards not or forgets what we say: we say to such, surely you hear with your harvest ears.

Harvest

Harvest time is a time of great pleasure, and a time of great business: and to the meaning of the Proverb is, you hear as if you were taken up with some other delight or affairs. Most hear the word of God with *harvest ears*, and that's the reason we have so ill a seed time for the word. While we are sowing the word, most men are in the harvests of their worldly contents and cares, and therefore their harvest in holiness is very small, if any: Most who bring forth fruit, bring forth but very little; and very n a y, bring forth none at all, and all upon this account.

Thirdly, Observe, *Job*, though but a man, yet (you see) he expects to be heard: Now,

If a man speaking to men takes it ill if he be not heard, how ill may God take it if men will not hear when he speaks? We put God to many of these prefaces: the Prophets of old, seldom, if ever, came with a message from God, but they begin with, *Thus saith the Lord*, or, *Hear what the Lord saith*, &c. Christ in the Gospel and in his Epistles to the Churches (*Rev.* 2. 2.) repeats this often. *He that hath an ear to hear, let him hear*. So (*Psa.* 81. 13.) *O that my people had hearkened unto me*: and *vers.* 8. *Hear, O my people, and I will testify unto thee*. Thus God calls for, yea, even begs for hearing. Its a strange condescension, that he should stand wishing for our attention, who (upon the highest terms of sovereignty) may command our attention. Besides, God hath no need that we should hear him, he doth not speak to us for our help, or to supply his wants. *If he were hungry he would not tell us, for the world is his and the fulness of it* (*Psa.* 50. 12.) Now, if we take it ill that men will not hear us, when we are hungry to feed us, or when we are weak to help us, how much more may God take it ill at our hands when we will not hear him, who only commands us to our duty, or counsels us for our good. We are apt to think much if God do not speedily hear our prayers, and grant our requests: what cause do we give God to be angry when we will not hear his precepts nor hearken to his laws? And yet the Lord, instead of anger, expresses sometimes nothing but compassion when he is not heard. *O that my people had hearkened unto me*! God is much dishonoured when he is not heard, and yet he pities those who do not hear him.

Fourthly, *Hear diligently my speech, and my declaration with your ears*. Hence Observe, *God will be known and his will be known by weighty and extraordinary matters must be heard with more than ordinary spirits.*

Luk,

Link, 8. Take heed how you hear. There is as much danger in hearing ill, as there is benefit and comfort in hearing well. And according to the concernment of the word we hear, ought to be our heed in hearing. *He that hears the word of life, had need to hear for life.*

Fifthly, Observe,

It is not unuseful often to stir up our auditors to attention.

Job makes more prefaces than one to be heard, and he doth more than speak; when he speaks to be heard he speaks passionately. The Preacher tels us, *that, if the iron be blunt, and a man do not whet the edge, he must put to more strength* (Eccl. 10. 10.) so we may say in this case, if our hearers are dull, and we do not whet their edge, we must put more strength to it; or rather, we lose all our strength, how much soever we put to it. When spirits are low and dead, we must speak to raise and quicken them, or else we speak in vain, to instruct or reprove them. We say in our Proverb, *A whet is no let.* He that is whetting his sithe mows no grass, and yet he shall mow little unless he whet. There is as much work done in preparing the instruments with which we work, or the objects upon which we work, as there is in doing the work it self.

Lastly, Observe,

That good duties must not only be done, but be done diligently.

Hear diligently my words. We must not only pray, but pray diligently: not only love God, but love him with all our strength and with all our heart. The manner in which we perform a duty is as much to our acceptance as the matter of the duty, Eccl. 9. 10. *Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might.* It is very commendable, in our worldly or special callings, to do what we do with our might: but especially when we are about the things of God, which concern our heavenly or general calling, then whatsoever we do, let us do it with our might; when you hear, hear with all your might; when you pray, pray with all your might. (Jer. 48. 10.) *Cursed be he that doth the work of the Lord deceitfully:* we put in the margin, *negligently*, according to the letter of the Hebrew: and those two words may very well interpret one another; for he that doth a thing deceitfully, doth it negligently; and he that doth it negligently doth it deceitfully: he doth it as if he would deceive God or men; or both; but at last

he deceiveth his own soul. Therefore saith Job, *Hear diligently my speech, and my declaration with your ears.*

Job having thus renewed his preface for an attentive hearing, proceeds to give them reasons why he would be heard thus attentively. We have the first in the 18. verse.

Verse 18. *Behold now I have ordered my cause, I know that I shall be justified.*

My business is ready, I have ordered all things, therefore I would be heard. *When we have made great preparations we do not love disappointments.* As when the King (in the Parable) sent out saying, *my supper is ready, I have kild my oxen and my fawlings, and all is prepared, come to the marriage, and they began all to make excuse, he was wroth.* When a feast is provided and set upon the table, and the invited guests come not, who can take it well? 'Tis so in all other preparations, and this is Job's argument: *Hear diligently my speech, I do not call for attention having nothing to say, or nothing worth the hearing, I have ordered my cause.*

I have ordered.

The word signifieth to order with reason, to methodize things, it is applyed to the marshalling of Armies, and so to words or things wherein skill and art are shewed.

My cause.

The Hebrew [Mizpat] hath a three-fold use. It signifies, First, a dispute between parties. Secondly, the sentence of the Judge. Thirdly, the execution of the sentence. In this place the word is taken in the first sence, for the setting and stating of a controversie about which parties are to plead or dispute. *Behold I have ordered my cause,* as if he had said, *I am not come unpprepared to this bar; though you through ignorance or prejudice mistake my condition, yet I have examined it, and purely considered mine own cause, and upon good grounds I have concluded with my self, notwithstanding all mine afflictions God hath not punished me for my sin, but still accounts me innocent and righteous.* So the words carry that rejoicing which Job had in the integrity of his heart, and goodness of his cause, he having thoroughly weighed and digested what he had to speak. All things being thus ready, he made no

significat quicquid certatione & ordine disponitur, ut acies, &c.

triam continet, 1. variationes litigationum. 2. sententiam judicis. 3. executionem sententiae. Rab Sal. ad causam meam disputandam ductus ut me a vestris criminacionibus absoluerem. Bcz.

question but to go away with victory, and get the day after a full hearing. *I know I shall be justified,*

I know.

We may distinguish of a three-fold knowledge.

First, Notional or speculative, which is the work barely of the understanding. Of that I conceive the Apostle speaks (1 Cor. 8. 7.) *Knowledge puffeth up.* There is a knowledge swimming in the brain, which hath some light, but no heat, much wind, but no nourishment in it.

Secondly, There is an experimental knowledge seated in the heart, and visible in the life: The Samaritans profess this (Job. 4. 42.) *Now we believe, not because of thy saying, for we have heard him our selves, and know that this is indeed the Christ,* that is, we are experimentally convinced by what we have heard and seen, that *this is He.* (Eccles. 8. 5.) *Who so keepeth the commandment shall know no evil* (so the Hebrew) we translate it, *he shall feel no evil*, that is, he shall not have an experimental knowledge of evil. A man that keepeth the commandment knoweth what is evil, or else he could not do that which is good; but he that *keepeth the commandment shall know no evil*, that is, he shall not feel any evil. So we are to understand that of the Apostle (2 Cor. 5. 21.) where he saith, that *Christ knew no sin*; shall we think that Christ died for he knew not what? He died to take away sin, and did not he know what sin was? Yes, Christ knew fully what sin was, he knew what the nature, and what the effects of it were: but he knew no sin experimentally, he felt no sin in his own heart, he acted no sin in his life. We say to a man that liveth in prosperity, *You never knew poverty*; and to an healthy man, *You never knew sickness*. This is experimental knowledge.

There is a third kind of knowledge, which we call *fiducial*, when the heart cleaveth to, or is ascertain'd of what we know. Of this we are to understand the Apostle John (1 Ep. 2. 3.) *And hereby do we know that we know him.* To know that we know, is to be assured that we know. And again, in the fifth chapter of the same Epistle, vers. 13. *These things have I written to you that believe on the Name of the Son of God, that ye may know that ye have eternal life.* We may believe, and yet not know that we shall live, much less that we have eternal life. Many have a
vital

vital act, who have not a fiducial act of faith : and therefore, while the Apostle in this verse, saith, *I have written unto you that believe on the Name of the Son of God*, he also saith, *I have written, that ye may believe on the Name of the Son of God*. If they did believe before, why doth he write unto them that they might believe? They had the faith of adherence and recumbence, but he desires to raise and heighten them to the faith of evidence and assurance. Such a faith the Apostle expresseth (2 Cor. 4. 14.) *Knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus, shall raise us up also by Jesus, and shall present us with you.* (*Knowing this*) How did the Apostle know this? Not barely by speculation, not at all by experience, for he was not yet raised up : But he was assured of it, as if it had been already done, *that he which raised up the Lord Jesus, shall raise us up also by Jesus.*

When Job saith, *I know I shall be justified*, his was not a speculative knowledge, but partly an experimental knowledge, for he found that he was already justified, and partly a fiducial knowledge ; *I know*, that is, I am sure that the Lord will justify me, and that I shall depart from this bar acquitted in this controversy. He doth not say, *I know that I have not sinned*, but *I know that I shall be justified from my sin*, and not only carry this present cause, but continue in the love and gracious acceptance of God for ever.

I know I shall be justified.

Justification is the declaring of a man to be just : He is just, not only who hath no sin, but he who is acquitted from his sin, or to whom his sin is not imputed. He is righteous whom God pronounceth righteous, though in himself ungodly, for God justifieth the ungodly, Rom. 4. 5. Job knew he was thus justified, yet I conceive the justification strictly intended here, is the determination of the question between him and his friends on his side ; which yet reached his total standing in a state of justification. This he opposeth to what he had affirmed of the hypocrite in the former words, *An hypocrite shall not come before him*, that is, he shall not be justified, but I know that I shall be justified.

Hence Observe,

First, *That a godly man, even in this life, may arrive at assurance that he is, and shall continue in a good, in a justified condition.*

It is good to be justified, but it is better to know that we shall be justified. There are three great graces spoken of by the Apostle (1 Cor. 13. 13.) *Faith, Hope, and Love*: And the Scripture holds out an assurance in reference to every one of these. First, The assurance of faith (Heb. 10. 22.) *Let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith*. This assurance of faith hath a double respect: first, to our persons; secondly, to our services, that in both we are pleasing unto God. Secondly, There is an assurance of hope (Heb. 6. 11.) *We desire that every one of you do shew the same diligence, to the full assurance of hope unto the end*. Faith hath an eye to the truth of the promise; Hope to the good of the promise; and the assurance of hope is, that we shall certainly receive that good. Thirdly, There is also an assurance of love (1 Joh. 4. 18.) *Perfect love casteth out fear*. How is love made perfect, and how doth it cast out fear? *Herein* (saith the 19th verse) *is love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgement, because as he is so are we in this world*; that is, as his love is sincere to us, so is ours to him (according to our measure) even in this life, and this gives us boldness or assurance that all shall go well with us in the day of judgement, or in the next life; and so this love casteth out all fear of condemnation in that day; which fear, where it remains (as the Apostle concludes) *hath torment*, then which nothing is more contrary to assurance. In perfect love there is no torment, because there is no fear; and there is no fear, because there is an assurance of the love of God. In this love the soul doth repose, rest and delight in it self. There is a fourth thing spoken of, to which also assurance is annexed. (Col. 2. 2.) *The full assurance of understanding*: This is the clearness of our apprehension about the things which we believe, and upon which we fasten by faith and love. The light of the understanding shining upon the mysteries of the Gospel, and mixing with our other graces, bottoms the soul upon the strongest foundation, and raiseth it up to the highest pinnacle of assurance. We may say of assurance, in reference unto these four graces, as Philosophers do of the heavens, in reference to the four elements; they tell us the heavens are neither earth nor air, neither fire nor water, but they are a quintessence, or a fifth essence. So we may say, assurance is neither faith, nor hope, nor love nor knowledge, but it is a fifth thing, sublimated and raised, either out of or above all these: it is somewhat of each of these, but more then all these.

I know that I shall be justified is more than knowledge or love, or hope or faith, even the result of them all in their best perfections. Knowledge above knowledge is the assurance or understanding: Faith above faith is the assurance of faith: Hope and love above hope and love are the full assurance of hope and love made perfect. This is called by the Apostle (*Rom. 4.*) *A full persuasion*. Abraham (*said the text, vers. 22*) *being fully persuaded*. It is a Metaphor taken from ships that come into an harbour with full sail; so doth the soul sometimes: It comes into the port of a heavenly peace with full sail, with top and top gallant (as we use to say) with all the sails spread, and colours flying. So it was with Abraham; there was not any full of his soul but was filled with the wind of assurance. This is called (*Joh. 14. 21.*) the manifestation of Christ to the soul: *He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me, and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will to de him, and manifest myself to him.* Christ is manifested to many by the reading and preaching of his word, but he manifests himself only into some by the light and influences of his Spirit: The former is common to all who live within the sound of the Gospel; the later is the sole privilege of those who obey the Gospel, nor do all these receive this privilege now, very few enjoy it at all times. Christ loves many a soul to whom he doth not presently manifest his love. God hath love laid up in his heart for all his, but he doth not shed his love abroad into all their hearts by the holy Ghost (*Rom. 5. 5.*) *The first fruits of the Spirit* (*Rom. 8. 23.*) *The witness of the Spirit* (*vers. 16 of that chapter*) *The sealing of the Spirit* (*Eph. 1. 14.*) *The earnest of the Spirit* (*2. Cor. 1. 5.*) are not bestowed upon every believer at all times, and not sensibly upon some at all in this life: And all these are but several expressions of this one thing, our knowing that we shall be justified: Yet in this many of the Saints have gloried before they came to glory. *Habakkuk* had it in the height, so had many of the old Worthies, *Hab. 1. 13, 35.* Though their Gospel-light was not so clear as the Gospel-light after Christ came; yet they saw the promises afar off, they embraced them, and were persuaded of them: by these three steps of seeing, embracing and persuasion, they ascended to an assurance or knowledge that they should be justified.

But some may say, these were extraordinary men, can ordinary believers attain or know this?

All do not know it, but all may. There are but some believers who reach this perfection, yet all should be aiming at and reaching after it. And though they were extraordinary men in whom the Scripture gives instance; Such as *Abraham, Habakkuk, Paul*, &c. yet as the Apostle saith of some under eminent temptations, (*1 Cor. 10. 13.*) *There hath no temptation taken you, but such as is common to man*, so we may say of those who attained those eminent consolations, there is no consolation hath been given unto those but what is common to believers. For as few men fall into all those temptations which are common to man; so few believers attain all those consolations which are common to believers. Some are slothful, and will not give diligence to make their calling and election sure, others cannot find it sure to them (though it be in it self) notwithstanding all their diligence.

If any object further, that of the Apostle (*Rom. 11. 20.*) *Be not high-minded, but fear.*

I answer, That fear is a duty, which is opposed to high-mindedness; but that fear is, at least, an affliction, which is opposed to steadfastness. Again, this is not spoken to nourish doubting whether we are justified or no, but to preserve us from presumption when we are justified. So we may answer those places (*Prov. 28. 14.*) *Blessed is the man that feareth alwaies.* (*Phil. 2. 12.*) *Work out your salvation with fear and trembling.* These seem to call Christians to live in a doubtful condition, or in a state of trepidation alwaies fearing: but their intendment is, not to keep the soul from being settled by faith in Christ, but from being high-flown in any opinion of our selves: or the Spirit speaks thus, not to put us upon doubts of our standing, but to preserve us from falling. For these cautions are so far from opposing assurance, that they strengthen it. The way not to be afraid is thus to fear; nor are any so sure as they who thus tremble. They that are working out their salvations with fear and trembling, may know without fear and trembling that they shall be saved: and they that thus fear alwaies, may be assured that they shall be above fear for ever. But say some, the Preacher speaks out against this knowledg, *Ecc. 9. 1.* *No man knoweth love or hatred.* It is true, *not by all that is before him*: we cannot know love and hatred from the works of God without us, but we may know love and hatred by the work of God upon us, or by the workings of God within us. We cannot fetch an evidence that

God loves us out of our chests, and in ovey-bags, nor can we read an assurance or a conveyance for heaven, in the assurances and conveyances of our lands; but we may fetch this evidence and read this conveyance from, and in the covenant of grace, received by faith, witnessed and sealed to our hearts by the holy Spirit.

Secondly, When was it that *Job* manifested this height of assurance? *I know that I shall be justified.* It was after he had said, *I have ordered my cause.*

Hence Observe.

That true assurance or a knowledge that we shall be justified, arises from a due consideration of the state of our hearts and lives.

I have ordered my cause, and now I know. *Job's* assurance did not grow whilst he slept or was secure, his was not an assurance arising from negligence, but from diligence. Some conclude what they have no premises for: they will conclude for heaven and glory, they make no doubt but they shall be saved, but they have no foundation to build this tower of assurance upon, they can say nothing to warrant or bear up their confidence. It is an easie thing to say, *I know I shall be justified,* but it is a hard thing for a man to say, *I have ordered my cause.* They who say they know they shall be justified before they have ordered their cause, do but *build castles in the air*, whereas this castle should be built upon Christ, he is the foundation. Some are as confident as confidence in self, who yet are as ignorant as ignorance in self: some are as confident as confidence in self, who yet are as prophane as prophaneness in self, as proud as pride in self, as worldly as the world in self: Is this the ordering of our cause? or can they order their cause whose hearts and lives are thus out of order? A true believer is able to shew somewhat for it, why he is so sure: he can shew Christ (as I may so speak) his bracelets and his love-tokens, he can tell Christ of the secret smiles and kisses which he hath given his soul some time or other: he can say, Christ is come to me both by water and blood, he can produce the graces and the actings of his Spirit, and can say, by these I am assured, by these I am grown up to this perswasion, that nothing shall ever separate me from the love of God. If any man say he is sure he shall be justified, let him consider how he came by his assurance: Have you ordered your cause, and viewed your state in the glass of the word? hath that presented to you justification, pardon and peace flowing to you in the blood of Christ? If it be so, you may

say

will plead with me? As the Apoſtle ſends a challenge in the behalf of believers (*Rom. 8. 33.*) *Who ſhall condemn? Who ſhall lay any thing to the charge of Gods elect?* let me ſee the man or devil who dares. So believers are able to ſend challenges themſelves. Who is it that will plead with us? but are there none will do it? will none accept their challenge? yea, many may be found to plead with them, but none can overcome them. This text in *Job*, and the point grounded upon it, is of the ſame interpretation with that (*Rom. 8. 31.*) *If God be with us, who can be againſt us? Who can be againſt us?* many are againſt thoſe with whom God is, yea, many will be againſt them becauſe God is with them. *They are moſt oppoſed by men whom God owneth moſt.* But who can be againſt us, to overthrow and conquer us? we ſhall ſtand againſt all oppoſition if God be with us. So here, Who will plead with me? *Job* had thoſe that would plead with him, he wanted not undertakers, there was *Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar*; theſe pleaded with him, but theſe did not overcome him. God gives ſentence for *Job*, chap. 42. 7. *Ye have not ſpoken of me the thing that is right, as my ſervant Job hath.* The Prophet brings in Jeſus Chriſt in ſuch a triumph of ſpirit over all poſſible enemies or oppoſers (*Iſa. 50. 7, 8.*) Where as he had ſhewed Chriſt profeſſing that all his power to fulfill the active part of his Mediatorſhip was derived to him from his father (verſ. 4.) *The Lord hath given to me the tongue of the Learned, &c.* So there he ſhews that all the ſtrength and courage with which he was armed to ſuffer or contend in the paſſive part of his Mediatorſhip, was alſo derived to him from his Father, and maintained in him by a continual ſupply of his aſſiſtance. *The Lord God will help me, therefore ſhall I not be confounded, therefore have I ſet my face as a flint, and I know that I ſhall not be aſhamed: he is near that juſtifieth me, who will contend with me? Let us ſtand together (as plaintiff and defendant uſe to do in a law ſuite before the Judge) who is mine adverſary? (or maſter of my cauſe, or owner of my judgement, that entreth his action againſt me) let him come near to me. Behold the Lord God will help me, who is he that will condemn me? Lo they all ſhall wax old as a garment, the moth ſhall eat them.* Theſe words are a comment upon *Job*, and fully explain his meaning: both give us the ſtrength of this Obſervation.

That the Lord being near to a ſoul and ſtanding on his ſide, he can never be prevailed againſt.

The Apostle Paul applies that of the Prophet (which originally belongs to Christ) to the comfort of every Believer (Rom. 8. 33, 34.) *Who shall lay any thing to the charge of Gods elect? It is God that justifieth: Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea, rather that is risen again; who is even at the right hand of God.* Here are the holy challenges of faith; faith is ready for all comers. If the law come to plead with us, faith tells it that Christ hath fulfilled the law for us. If sin come to oppose us, faith tells it, *Christ in the similitude of sinful flesh hath condemned sin in the flesh.* If death come and look the soul in the face, faith answers, *Christ hath abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel:* yea, faith can, not only answer, but scorn death, *O death, where is thy sting?* If the devil come, faith tells him he is but a conquered enemy, and that *Christ hath* (long since) *spoiled principalities and powers, and made a shew of them openly: that Christ came to destroy* (and hath destroyed in us) *the works of the devil.* Thus faith repels the charge of the law, of sin, of hell, and of the devil; yea, if *God himself* frown upon the soul, and his wrath seem to burn as hot as fire against us, faith can tell *God himself* that Christ hath paid our debt, and given a ransom to God for us, and therefore knows that he will not require it of us again, because *he is just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus.* If none of these, if neither law, nor sin, nor death, nor devil, nor God himself (considering how he hath been pleased to condescend to poor sinners, and engage himself to Christ on our behalf) can plead down the believing soul, then nothing can. Nor did Job boast beyond his line, when he said, *Who will plead with me?*

Lastly, These words, *Who will plead with me?* hold forth not only Jobs courage that he durst, in this case, speak with any living, but also the necessity which pressed him to speak, which was such, that if he did not speak he could not live, as is clear in the last clause of this verse.

For now if I hold my tongue I shall give up the ghost.

Nunc enim si-
lebo & expira-
bo.

Mr. Broughton renders, *If now I speak not I should starve.*

The Original may be literally rendered thus, *For now I shall be silent and give up the ghost.* And so the meaning is, as if Job were halting his undertakers to this quarrel, wishing them to make speed and come to plead with him, that he might try out this

this business by dint of argument, because he saw death ready to put him to silence; *I shall die*, and then it will be too late to argue or speak with me, therefore while I live, and I perceive I shall not live long, let us try it out, and see what you have to say against me.

Secondly, These words, *If I hold my tongue I shall give up the ghost*, may note two things. First, That Job was filled with abundance of matter, which was exceeding burthensome to keep within his breast, therefore he must needs vent, and let it out. As if he had said, I have so much to speak, that it will even kill me if I should conceal it. *Elihu* was in the same case (*Job* 32. 17.) *I also (saith he) will shew mine opinion; for I am full of matter, the spirit within me constraineth me: Behold my belly is as wine which hath no vent, it is ready to burst like new bottles, I will speak that I may be refreshed, I will open my lips and answer.* *Elihu* was constrained to open his mind, it would be an ease to him to speak. So saith Job, *Now if I hold my tongue I shall give up the ghost.* Or secondly, It may note, that Job was much afflicted and exceedingly troubled in his spirit at what his friends had spoken to him, and charged upon him. And so it is, as if he had said, you have so tormented me with your reasonings, that if I have not liberty to justifie mine own innocency, my heart will break: it were better for me to die then to live stained with such imputations, and I know not how to live unless I may wipe them off.

Satius mihi fuerat mori quam silentio cansam meam prodere. Non possum me continere quin loquar; Alioquin moriendum mihi est. Merc.

Hence Observe,

First, *It is a pain not to speak when we are much engaged to speak.*

Thus the Prophet complains (*Jerem.* 20. 9.) *I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay.* As some are wearied with speaking, so some are wearied because they do not speak: they are tired with holding their tongues, as much as some are with using them. Words kept in are as great a burthen to some, as words spoken out are to others. When a man is under such a pressure he finds no rest till he hath delivered himself. When *Josephs* brethren came to him, he hid his affections a great while, but as soon as he saw his brother *Benjamin* he could not refrain, he must go into a private place to weep, and spend his passion, else it would have broke out before them all. 'Tis so with us when we have much to say to God in prayer, the heart hath a load

upon it, and cannot be quiet, it is ready to break and give up the ghost untill we have broken or opened our minds to God.

From the second sence Observe,

That a man can easier die, then suffer blots to lie upon his integrity.

Our reputation should be nearer to us than our lives, therefore saith Job, *if I keep silence I shall give up the ghost*, I cannot bear this. He was not so sensible of any of his sufferings as of this. And as it is an ease, so it is a duty to repair our own credit, and to take off what we find unjustly charged upon us: especially when it reflects upon Religion, as it did in Job's case. His friends suspected him of hypocrisie, *Is this thy fear, thy confidence, and the uprightness of thy waies?* These jealousies stirred up the spirit of Job to call for his adversaries, and provoke them to appear and plead it out with him. I have from other passages toucht this point before, and shall therefore add no more here.

Job Chap. 13. Vers. 20, 21, 22, 23.

Onely do not two things unto me, then will I not hide myself from thee.

Withdraw thine hand far from me, and let not thy dread make me afraid.

Then call thou, and I will answer; or let me speak, and answer thou me.

How many are mine iniquities and sins? make me to know my transgression and my sin.

IN the three former verses, Job prefac'd to his friends, and bespake their attention; being so well assured of his cause, that he sat down under the comfort of this conclusion, *I know that I shall be justified*. Here, in the three first verses of this context Job bespeaks God himself, and seems to indent with him upon some conditions before he would speak further or proceed in this dispute.

Verſe 20. *Onely do not two things unto me, then will I not hide my ſelf from thee.*

As if he had ſaid, I am willing to argue, but it muſt be upon theſe pre-cautions.

Some underſtand theſe words, *Onely do not two things unto me*: as if Job had deſired God not to do two things unto him at once; that is, not to afflict him and conſer with him, not to ſmite him and diſpute with him together; it is too much to be at two ſuch works, or rather to be doing and ſuffering at one time; therefore do not two things to me, any one of theſe is exerciſe enough for one man at once.

What the two things he would not have done unto him were, are ſet down in the next verſe, Firſt, *Withdraw thine hand far from me*; Secondly, *Let not thy dread, &c. Then call thou, &c.*

In that Job deſires God would not do theſe two things unto him, Obſerve,

Firſt, *That all ſufferings are not equal, there is a gradual difference among ſufferings as well as ſpecifical.*

As all ſins, ſo all ſufferings are not equal. Some ſins are more grievous and burthenſome to God than others are (Jer. 44. 4.) *I did ſend unto you all my ſervants the Prophets, ſaying, O do not this abominable thing which I hate.*

This abominable thing. There were many other abominable things which the Lord hated, and which he would not have that people do; but their idolatrous worſhip, their burning incenſe to ſtrange gods, was a ſpecial abomination, *O do not this abominable thing which I hate.* Now, as ſome ſins are more grievous unto God than others, and therefore he deſires earneſtly, that we would not burthen him with them: ſo the Lord laies ſome afflictions upon his people which are more grievous to them than any other could be, and therefore they cry out, *O do not this unto us*: This is ſad.

Hence Note again,

That we are apt to think we can bear any affliction better then that which we fear or feel.

O do not theſe two things unto me, were it any thing elſe. I might undergo it, but I am not able to endure theſe. Some ſpeak thus of any affliction; and he that hath pain in any part of his body, is apt to judge, were this pain ſomewhere elſe, I could bear

bear it better, we are very prone to diſpute the diſpenſations of God, and to think that he might place his chaſtningſ (if he muſt chaſtiſe us) ſome where elſe, as much to his own glory, and not ſo much to our ſorrow. *Only do not two things unto me.*

What then?

Then will I not hide my ſelf from thee.

The Hebrew is, *Then will I not hide my ſelf from thy face.* But ſuppoſe the Lord would not do thoſe two things for Job, could he hide himſelf from his face? David ſaith (Pſal. 139. 4.) *Whither ſhall I go from thy preſence?* It ſhould ſeem Job had ſome whither to go out of the preſence of God: *Elihu*, in the 34th of this book, ver. 22. tells us, *There is no darkneſs nor ſhadow of death where the workers of iniquity can hide themſelves.* How is it then that Job ſaith he would not hide himſelf, when as indeed he could not, upon what terms ſoever God ſhould deal with him?

I anſwer, When Job ſaith, *I will not hide my ſelf*, he intends not this, that he could hide himſelf, but that (if God would not do thoſe two things to him) he ſhould have no cauſe to hide himſelf. Hiding proceedeth from a double cauſe. Firſt, from fear, (Iſa. 2. 19.) *They ſhall go into the holes of the rocks, and into the caves of the earth for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of his Majeſty, when he ariſeth to ſhake terribly the earth.* Here is hiding for fear. So (1 Kin. 22. 25.) the Prophet *Micaiah* having received ſuch courſe uſage from King *Ahab*, tells him to his face; *Behold thou ſhalt ſee in that day when thou ſhalt go into an inner chamber to hide thy ſelf.* Secondly, Hiding proceeds from ſhame; a man that is aſhamed dares not ſhew his head. That hiding of our firſt parents was the effect of both theſe (Gen. 3. 10.) In their innocency they were naked and were not aſhamed: but after they had ſinned they ran among the thickets to hide themſelves, being both aſhamed and afraid: (verſ. 10.) *I heard thy voice in the garden and I was afraid, becauſe I was naked, and I hid my ſelf.*

*Et ſi nihil mihi
conſcius ſum, me
tamen abſconde-
rem & latebras
quarerem niſi
benevolentia
tua offenſione
robotaret.*

Fear and ſhame made him hide himſelf when once he had ſinned. When Job reſolves, *then I will not hide my ſelf from thee*, his meaning is, I will not be afraid to appear before thee, nor aſhamed to ſpeak unto thee, ſo he explains himſelf at the 22^d verſe, *Then call thou and I will anſwer, or let me ſpeak and anſwer thou me.* that is, I would come forth boldly, and ſtand with confidence at thy Tribunal. I ſhall give you a note from this, when I have ſhewed

ſhewed the matter of *Jobs* deprecation, *Do not two things move me, what two things?*

Verſe 21. *Withdraw thine hand far from me, and let not thy dread terrifie me, or, let not thy dread make me afraid.*

Theſe are the two things which he earneſtly deprecates, And for the removal of both theſe he prayed as earneſtly once before almoſt in the ſame words, (*chap. 9. ver. 34, 35.*) *Let him take his rod away from me, and let not his fear terrifie me, then would I ſpeak and not fear him, but it is not ſo with me.* Having opened theſe two verſes there at large, I ſhall refer the Reader thither: yet becauſe (though the matter be the ſame) the expreſſions vary, I ſhall a little inſiſt upon them.

Withdraw thine hand far from me.

That's his firſt condition. *By the hand of God,* he means either the afflictions that were upon him, and ſo it is as much as this, mitigate my ſufferings, abate my pains, release me from my ſorrows. The word which he uſeth, Chap. 9. 34. for *the rod of God,* is the ſame in effect which he uſeth here for *the hand of God.* Only with this difference, this properly ſignifies *the palms of the hand,* *Withdraw thy palms from me:* To ſtrike with the palm of the hand is to ſtrike like a father; a blow with the palm of the hand may have more ſmart with it, but it hath not ſo much force and wrath with it as a blow with the fiſt or hand cloſed. Yet I conceive *Jobs* intent is the ſame in both, and though he received ſtroaks of all ſorts, ſome with the palm, others with the fiſt, ſome greater, ſome leſs, yet all were with the hand of a father: nevertheless, *Job* deſires God would withdraw his hand, though he knew it was a fathers hand, becauſe while the ſmart and pain of that was ſo vehement upon him, he could not ſpeak nor manage his cauſe before him freely, *Withdraw thine hand away from me.*

Further, There was another thing, which this requeſt of *Job* may bear an illuſion to, *Remove thine hand away from me.* It was a cuſtome among the Ancients to lay the hand upon the head of an offender, as a token of his condemnation. And that's the reaſon why the hand was laid upon the head of the ſacrifice, when all the ſins of the people were confeſſed over it; ſhewing that the ſacrifice was (as it were) condemned to die, typifying the death of *Chriſt*, who was condemned for us, God having

מרחק
longe ſac a me.
כח habetur hic
non תי quod
cap. 9. 34. vir-
gam, hic palmas
i. e. plagam ſig-
nificat. Merc.

laid

laid upon him the iniquities of us all. Now, saith Job, *Remove thine hand away from me*: thou seemest to act towards me as if thou wert angry, or didst intend to pronounce a sentence of condemnation against me; O do not deal thus with me; how shall I treat with thee, whilst thou seemest to have such hard thoughts of me? Therefore *Withdraw thine hand away from me*.

But, what was it that lay upon Job as the hand of God? I shewed before, that it was his affliction, which though in it self it be no argument that God condemns, yet in the opinion of some men it is; and Job's friends did therefore think God condemned him, because they saw he afflicted him. So then, the removing of those afflictions, in reference to which his friends pronounced him condemned by God, would be as the withdrawing of the hand from the head of an offender, a sign of his acquitting and absolution.

Hence Note,

First, *Afflictions are grievous to the sensitive part of the best and holiest men.*

Even a Job prayeth, *Withdraw thine hand away from me*. There is no affliction for the present that is joyous but grievous; and as it is grievous to natural men, so it is grievous to the natural part of spiritual men. It is nothing else but grievous unto carnal men, they find no comfort, no sweet at all in it: the Saints do, their inward man hath joy and refreshing in their sorrows, but their outward man feels smart, therefore, *Remove thine hand away from me*.

Secondly, Observe,

While afflictions are sharp unto us, it is hard to compose the spirit to think of, or speak aright to God.

This discovers their folly who put off the great businesses about which they are to treat with God to a sick bed. Job saith to God, take away thine hand and then I will speak: these say I will speak to God when his hand is upon us; we will look to the health of our souls when our bodies are sick: But how rare is it to find a sick body and a quiet mind together! Job could not argue with God about his innocency while he was greatly afflicted, how then shall others about the settling of their eternal peace and the pardon of their sins? We are more prone to impatience than to repentance in the day of our distress. Thirdly, Observe.

It is lawful to pray for the removing of afflictions.

With

Withdraw thine hand away from me, was a good petition; we may make ſuch petitions unlawful if we put our wills as a law to God, and do not leave all to the will of God. We may pray for the thing, but we muſt ſubmit the circumſtances of it, the time of it, the manner of it, to the wiſdom of God. While we deſire him to withdraw his hand, we ſhould get our hearts willing to bear his hand; that's a gracious frame of heart indeed. As it is the worſt frame of heart to pray for the pardon and removing of our ſins, while we find a willingneſs, much more a reſolvedneſs in our hearts to continue in them; ſo it is the beſt frame of heart to pray for the removing of afflictions whileſt we find a willingneſs to continue under them, if God ſhall ſo diſpenſe and pleaſe. See more of this, Chap. 9. 34. *Withdraw thine hand away from me.*

And let not thy dread make me afraid.

Thy dread] Giants are called *Emims*, from this word (be-
 cauſe they are terrible to beholders.) And ſo are Idols, becauſe
 though they are indeed but meer ſcar-crows and bug-bears, yet
 they are terrible to the ignorant and unbelieving, as was further
 ſhewed, Chap. 9. 34. NON Te vi
unde Emil
Gigantes.

What was this *dread*? It may either be that terrour which accompanied his afflictions, there being as it were ſome ſparklings of Gods anger mixed with them. When God gives us the bittereſt cup of affliction to drink, if he do but drop in a little of his love we take it down as a pleaſant draught; but if he drop the leaſt of his anger into the cup of affliction, this is dreadful. Hence David prayeth (*Pſal. 6. 1.*) *O Lord, rebuke me not in thine anger, neither chaſten me in thy hot diſpleaſure.* He doth not pray abſolutely, let me not be rebuked, but *rebuke me not in thine anger*, let me ſee thy love in my rebukes. He knew God did love him, but he could not ſee it: God rebuked him, and he perceived nothing but anger; God chaſtened him, and he ſaw nothing but diſpleaſure, yea, and hot diſpleaſure; this made him cry out, *O Lord, rebuke me not, &c.*

Secondly, This *dread* may be taken for the majeſtical preſence of God; though there be no ſettings out of his anger or diſpleaſure, yet the very appearance of God to poor duſt and aſhes hath a dread in it, ſuch a dread, as not only ſtrikes the moſt eloquent man dumb, but the ſtouteſt dead: The majeſty of God is

infinitely above the creature; therefore he saith to *Moses*, *No man can see my face and live*; there is so much dread in the face of God, that man cannot behold it. We may conceive the Lord at this time letting out much of himself to *Job*, his terrour was upon him. God shews himself to no man two waies.

First, In some external visible form, so he often appeared to the Fathers in the old Testament. 'Tis the opinion of some that the Lord shewed his dreadfulness to *Job* by an outward apparition.

Secondly, God shews himself to the mind of man: and as the appearances of God to sense are very dreadful; so are those which he makes to faith. They who have no outward visions of God are yet often terrified at the mental apprehensions of his glory and Majesty. Faith makes things present, and doth evidence them to the soul as fully as sense can. God cannot be seen, yet faith can give us a sight of God, a sight of his power, and of his wrath, as well as of his goodness and mercy: and untill the Lord withdraw that, and put other evidences before the eye of the soul, there's no peace. That's the reason why many wicked men have been brought to utter despair, and dy'd in horror of conscience: they apprehend the wrath of God revealed against them, and their consciences are affected with it; there is a kind of faith upon their consciences, such as the devils have, who believe and tremble, and so do wicked men: they are full of trembling and astonishment at those representations of the greatness, power, and majesty of God, which their faith makes to them. Now, as it is with them, so it may be with true Believers much more: they have deep and terrible apprehensions of God; and according to the degree of this faith, is the degree of terrour which falls upon them (*Psal. 95. 11.*) *Who knoweth the power of thine anger? even according to thy fear so is thy wrath.* Though the displeasure of God be as himself, alwaies alike, yet to those whose hearts are tender the displeasure of God is more grievous. Hard hearts have no fear in them, and to them the displeasure of God is nothing, they dread it not, they will venture upon the pikes, and rush upon the swords point. *Job* was a tender-hearted man, he feared God, therefore these appearances of God to his faith did exceedingly affect and trouble him: So he speaks, Chap. 31. 23. *For destruction from God was a terrour to me, and by reason of his highness I could not endure.*

Hence

Hence Obſerve,

First, *The holy God is in himſelf very dreadful to the moſt holy and upright among the children of men.*

Job had ſaid, Chap. 10. 7. *Lord thou knoweſt that I am not wicked:* and at the 18th verſe of this chapter, *I know that I ſhall be juſtified.* What a faith was here! Yet now he confeſſeth, *Thy terror makes me afraid.* Where was there a holier man then *Habakkuk*? yet read the third chapter of that prophesie, and you ſhall find how he ſhook and trembled, how his lips did quiver, and rottenneſs entred into his bones, and all at the apprehenſions he had of the majeſty and greatneſs of God. That holy Prophet *Iſaiah*, how was he affected when God appeared to him! he crieth out, *Wo is me, for I am undone, for mine eyes have ſeen the King, the Lord of hoſts.* When the Lord appeared to publiſh that holy Law, how did the people tremble! O (ſay they) *let Moſes ſpeak to us, but do not thou ſpeak, leſt we die,* Exod. 19.

Secondly, Note,

That God doth ſometimes appear to his people in majeſty only, and not in mercy.

He letteth out his glory and his greatneſs, but conceals his goodneſs, his loving kindneſs and compaſſion. They can ſee a holy God, a juſt God, a high God, a glorious God, but they do not ſee a merciful God. God acts not as a natural, but as a voluntary agent, and therefore he can ſuſpend or diſpenſe himſelf as he pleaſeth. The ſun hath light, but the ſun (being a natural agent) cannot ſuſpend its light; it alwaies ſhews its brightneſs and beauty, except ſome cloud interpoſe, or the moon eclipse it: but the Lord who is light, and all light, doth not alwaies manifeſt himſelf in light; he puts clouds and darkneſs round about him; he hideth his face and will not be ſeen. Sometimes he appears all mercy, and at other times all juſtice, ſometimes all goodneſs, and at other times all wrath; ſometimes he lets out nothing but love, and at other times nothing but diſpleaſure. Now, as he varies his diſpenſations to us, ſo we are apt to vary in our apprehenſions of him: and as we cannot ſee God at all untill he manifeſt himſelf, ſo we ſee him no otherwiſe than he pleaſeth to manifeſt himſelf. Hence the ſame ſoul ſees him to day all mercy, and the next day, poſſibly, the next hour all juſtice. Now, his goodneſs reſtreineth, and anon his dread triſteth.

R r r a

Thirdly,

Thirdly; Observe,

That as some afflictions are more grievous than others, so those are most grievous to a godly man which carry any appearance of the displeasure of God.

Q. let not thy dread terrifie me. All sufferings cannot terrifie where God shews his love; and any will, where he shews his dread. If a man were in hell assured of the love of God, he could rejoyce; and if he were in heaven under thoughts of his wrath, he could not but tremble. His love is better than heavenly, and his wrath is worse than hell.

Lastly, Note, As a deduction from the whole,

That if a godly man may be thus terrified with the majesty of God, how terrible will the wrath of God be to the wicked!

Job was not afraid of the wrath of God against his person, for he had said immediately before, *I know I shall be justified.* If the majestical dread of God swallow up the best, the holiest men, how will the dreadful majesty of God swallow up wicked men! how will he consume them, who is to his own as a consuming fire! We may argue here, as the Apostle Peter doth in language near to this (1 Pet. 4. 18.) *If the righteous scarcely be saved; where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?*

Job having thus deprecated the terror of the Lord, *Withdraw thine hand far from me, and let not thy dread make me afraid:* resolves (upon the supposition of this grant) what to do.

Verse 22. *Then call thou, and I will answer, or let me speak, and answer thou me.*

This is as much, and in effect no more, than he said before, Chap. 9. 3. *Then would I speak and not fear him;* yet here he a little amplifies what he said there; for though Job doth often speak the same thing for substance, yet his expressions are full of useful variety, new flowers of rhetoric, and new actings of his affections shew themselves. There it was, *Then I will speak, and not fear him:* here, *Let him call, and I will answer, or let me speak, and answer thou me.*

Job, in these words, gives God his choice to take which part he pleased. As in law suits, one sustains the part of the plaintiff, and another sustains the part of the defendant; or as in disputes, one sustains the person of an opponent, and the other the person of a respondent. Unto these Job alludes, as if he had said, *I am*

*Altor vocat
reum, tens re-
spondet, Ita
constatur judi-
cium cum vo-
catione intelli-
gitur actio, &
cum responsione
defensio. Coc.*

entring

entering upon a diſpute, and commencing my ſuits in heaven before the tribunal of Jehovah: As for me, I know none own integrity ſo well, that I care not which part I take. I will be opponent, or I will be reſpondent: I will be plaintiff, or I will be defendant, and therefore Lord I refer it wholly unto thee: take which part thou pleaſeſt, I'll take up what thou leaveſt, and do what thou appointeſt. Then call thou, and I will answer.

This offer argues only abundance of courage and holy confidence, yet ſome have adjudged it ſcandalous and full of arrogance: as if Job had taken too much upon him, and had ſpoken more boldly to God then became him: as if he thought himſelf match enough for God at any weapon, or were ready to deal with him upon any terms. *Eliphaz* is ſuppoſed to aim at this paſſage (*cha. nem, interim fui* 15.4. *yea, thou caſteſt off fear*) yet moſt excuſe him, conceiving that all this did flow from an holy familiarity which Job had with God: and that becauſe he had a gracious friendlineſs in his heart towards God, he would therefore ſpeak to God as to a friend. Or it imports only that Job was very ſure of his cauſe, and therefore, as when a man would ſhew the confidence he hath to foil his adverſary in combat, he ſaith, chooſe what place you will, take what weapon you will, bring out two ſwords, take you one, and I will take the other; I dare not to ſurpriſe you, or deal with you upon diſadvantages. So Job being aſſured of a good end, was content to ſtand to the determination of God himſelf, in what way he ſhould proceed to tryal.

Verba ſunt arrogantia & ſcandaloſa. Caj.

Deo dat optionem, interim fui obliquus & immodicus. Merc. Audacius agit pateret potius patientia, Merc.

Then call thou, and I will answer.

Then] This particle *Then*, implies that he could not do it till then, and that then he could: as if he had ſaid, *I ſhall be in a caſe, either to answer or to oppoſe, unleſs theſe two conditions be granted, but then I ſhall.*

Call thou.

The Lord calleth us to do our duty: And he calleth us to answer, and give account how we have done our duty, or what we have done. He calleth daily to the firſt in the preaching of the word. And he will call us all to the latter in that great day by the ſounding of the Archangels Trumpet. (*Pſa. 50.4*) *He ſhall call to the heavens from above, and to the earth, that he may judge his people:* and verſ. 1. *He hath called the earth,* that is, the people of the

the earth, he will call them all before his throne; *Job* offered himself to a personal day of judgement before that general day of judgement. *Call thou*, is (*verbum forensis*) a law-term, call me to the bar, or call me before thy judgement-seat.

And I will answer.

The word which we translate *I will answer*, signifies often in Scripture, *to testify or give witness*; (*Exo. 20. 16.*) *Thou shalt not bear false witness*, the Hebrew is, *Thou shalt not answer false witness*, that is, when thou art required by a Judge to speak in any case, thou shalt not answer besides the truth. When *Jacob* had put his part of the cattle on the one side, and *Laban* on the other, he saith, *so shall my righteousness answer for me in time to come* (*Gen. 30. 33.*) it shall testify or bear witness for me. The word is used in that sense (*Isa. 59. 12.*) *Our sins testify against us*, the Hebrew is, *Our sins answer against us*, which imports that our actions whether good or bad shall be called out to speak what we have been and are. And then, good actions will give a good testimony, and evil actions will give an ill testimony; (*Hos. 5. 5.*) *The pride of Israel doth testify to his face*; or *doth answer to his face*, thus here, *Let him call, and I will answer*: I will give in evidence and testimony according to the truth of my heart and life. I will not bear false witness, though it be in my own cause.

Or let me speak, and answer thou me.

כח Verbum
respondendi in
hac secunda
parte est ab alia
radice & lenius
accipi debet.
Pined.

There's the other part. *Let me speak*, I will be plaintiff, or opponent, and let the Lord answer or return; for the word which we render to *answer*, in this latter clause is of a different root in the Hebrew from that in the former, and carries in it more respect. It intends not any summons or citation of God to answer, but is an humble supplication, beseeching him to return what his wisdom should think fit in answer.

Hence Observe,

That acquaintance with free grace gives us mighty confidence towards God.

Take away thy dread and then I am ready for a hearing. I acknowledge my weakness is such that I cannot bear thy majesty; and I know my own uprightness is such, that I am assured of thy mercy. When the Lord had called his people to repentance, (*Isa. 1. 16.*) *Wash you, make you clean, put away the evil of your*

your doings, then he invites them to a free conference, *Come, let us reason together*. He speaks familiarly to them, I will argue it out with you, against all your unbelief: *come, let us reason together*. Now, as God speaks familiarly to man, when he hath put his sins away: so when the Lord hath put his dread away, man speaks familiarly to God; *Come Lord, let us reason together*, now let me speak, and answer thou me; The place where God communed with his ancient people the Jews, was the *Propitiatory or Mercy-seat*. Exod. 25. 22. and the place where God communeth now with his people is called the *Throne of grace* (Heb. 4. 16.) *Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need*. We can have no boldness but at a throne of grace; when grace in our own hearts opposing sin meets with that grace which is in the heart of God for the pardon of sin, we are carried, as upon Eagles wings, beyond the regions of fear. Job lived long before Christ came in the flesh, yet Christ was come into his heart; and when he desired God to remove his dread, he moved to be looked upon and heard in a Mediatour.

Job having thus prepared his way begins to plead.

Verse 23. *How many are mine iniquities and my sins? make me to know my transgression and my sin.*

His way of arguing is much like that of the 7th and 10th chapters, and his general scope is the same, at once to maintain his own former integrity, and to aggravate his present misery. That's the sum of his discourses, queries, and expostulations, to the end of the fourteenth Chapter.

How many are mine iniquities?

He seems to take the hint of this first enquiry from Zophars wish, chap. 11. vers. 5. *O that God would speak, and open his lips against thee: and that he would shew thee the secrets of wisdom, that they are doubled to that which is. Know therefore that God exacteth of thee less than thine iniquity deserveth.* Job answers, you desired that God would speak, you doubted not, but if he did, he would make it appear my sins were double to mine afflictions: With all mine heart (saith he) this is it I long for, I desire that God would speak, and that he would speak out what my sins are. *How many*

many are mine iniquities and my ſins? make me to know my tranſgreſſion and my ſin. As if he had ſaid, I am willing to bear, and know the worſt of my ſelf.

Some conceive that Job having made that motion, let him ſpeak, and I will answer, &c. ſtood waiting a while to ſee what God would do: But receiving no answer, he thus breaks out; *How many are mine iniquities?*

And theſe put a very harſh conſtruction upon this Interrogation, as if Job had ſaid, *What? am I ſo wicked and ſinful, that I am not worthy unto whom thou ſhouldeſt ſhew my wickedneſs and my ſin? if I am ſo vile, let it appear how vile I am, and ſhew me thoſe ſins which have rendred me (it ſeems) not only unworthy of acception, but of an answer.* I like not this gloſs, neither doth it bear the image of a gracious ſpirit, ſuch as Job's alwaies was, though it was ſometimes a little muddy and tumultuous.

*Adeone flagiti-
oſus ego, ut ne
dignus habear
cui improbitate
exprobes? Salte
igitur scelera
mea oſtende mi-
hi.*

Rather thus, Job having a purpoſe to defend his cauſe, aſked at once, from the grief of his heart, and from the clearneſs of his conſcience, *How many are mine iniquities?* as if he had ſaid, I am ſuſpected of great crimes, and I am in the eye of my friends as a perſon condemned already, but I would thoſe crimes were brought forth, and ſurely they ought, before I am either cenſured or condemned: therefore Lord, *How many are mine iniquities and my ſins? make me to know my tranſgreſſion and my ſin.*

So the words carry a ſtrong deſire, which this afflicted ſoul had diſcovered more then once before, to ſee the bottom of his condition, and to find out the reaſon why God did thus afflict him: and if it were for ſin (about which he had no fear upon his conſcience) O that God would but ſhew him his ſin! His ſin (under that notion) was a ſecret to him, but he was willing to know it. There are two queſtions which would be reſolved before I proceed further to the opening of this. *How many are mine iniquities?*

Fiſt, Seeing Job, at the 9th chap. ver. 22. laid down this con- cluſion, *He ſlayeth the wicked and the righteous;* and upon that bot- tom grounded all his answers, that the diſpenſations of God are alike in outward things to good and bad; Hence the queſtion riſeth, why he labours ſo much to clear himſelf of ſin, as if his af- flictions muſt needs argue him wicked, whereas he before had argued, that the Lord doth as much afflict the righteous as the wicked.

I answer, *Job* speaks thus, as vindicating his person, not as doubting his state. He did not question whether God was his friend, because he was afflicted; but he desired to remove the suspicions of his friends. *Zophar* (*chap. 11. ver. 14.*) gave *Job* occasion to call for this discovery, while he counselled him, *If iniquity be in thine hand, put it far away, and let not wickedness dwell in thy Tabernacles.* His friends put these jealous suppositions, these ifs and and's often upon him, *if iniquity be in thine hand, &c.* The counsel was good, but their jealousie was not. *Job* saw what hung upon their spirits, and therefore begs of God to unsecret his sins and lay open his transgressions. As if he had said, *Lord, my friends are unsatisfied with all the professions and protestations which I have made of my innocency: they suppose that I keep my sin close, and roll it like a sweet morsel under my tongue: they would rake into my life, and see the bottom of my heart, Lord, let them see all, shew them what I am, and let me know what I have done. If it be as these men say, let it appear to thy glory and to my shame. How many are mine iniquities and my sins? make me to know my transgression and my sin.*

Secondly, It is questioned why *Job* makes request that God would shew him what and how many his sins were, was he curious to know their Arithmetical number? Did he think God had over-reckoned him, or that himself could know their reckoning? or did he think his sins were so few, or so small that they could not hurt him? One sin is enough to justifie God in our condemnation, we need not ask for a great many. The best of Saints, even they who have lived in no sin, and comparatively have committed but few sins, yet have desired the Lord to cover their sins, and pronounced him blessed, *whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered* (*Psal. 32. 1.*) as the Saints are not forward to proclaim their good works, so neither is it pleasant to them to have their sins proclaimed: why then is *Job* so bulie about this point of knowledge?

I answer, *Job* did not ask this question either out of curiosity to know the number of his sins, or as if God had put more to his account then he had committed. He did not desire this, as if he thought his sins were either so few or so small that they could do him no hurt; nor doth he speak by way of extenuation, as if they were not many. He knew his sins were many and great, yea, that if he had but one, and that a little one, he could not boast before God.

S f f

But

*Nihil aliud est
quod se sibi bene
conficiam.*

But First, He speaks thus, because he knew his sins were neither so many as his friends had reckoned them, nor so great as they had aggravated them, nor so black as they had painted them.

Secondly, When he desires to be shewed his sin, it is a proof that he was not guilty of any beloved sin. He speaks as *Paul*, 1 Cor. 4. 4. *I know nothing by my self.* Lord, if any filth lie unseen, make me know it, *his heart did not condemn him*, and therefore he had confidence towards God. 1 Job. 3. 21. as if he had said, Lord, My accusers have no proof, they do but guess that I am wicked, my own heart is not so much as my accuser at all; Lord, thou knowest exactly what I am, shew me, shew all, How many are my sins?

Thirdly, He desired to know his sins, first, that he might be-mourn and repent for his yet unknown sins; secondly, that he might turn from them, and return to God more fully; thirdly, That he might be more watchful against them.

Lastly, He was bold to ask this question, because he knew God would deal with him as a Father by a covenant of grace through Christ, not as a Judge by a covenant of works in himself: and therefore he was not afraid to know his sins, and to have them all set in order before him; He was assured God would not condemn him, and he did not contend to justify himself before God, he only waited till God would justify him against the contendings and uncharitable surmisings of men. These, or such as these were the grounds upon which Job makes his address to God, and puts both this question and request: *How many are mine iniquities and my sins? make me to know my transgression and my sin.*

How many.

The word refers both to quantity and quality: The Vulgar reads it, *How great sins have I? or how great are the sins which I have?* we read it quantitatively for the number, *how many are my sins?* How great, or how many? Make me to know both their number and their nature.

Hence Observe,

First, *God only can give us the number and nature of our sins.*

No man can tell how many his sins are, they are more then

the

*non ad utrumq;
pertinet, ad
multitudinem
scilicet &
magnitudinem.
Quantas habeo
iniquitates?
Vulg.*

the hairs upon our head, they are as the sands upon the sea-shore innumerable. The kinds or sorts of sin, yea, the greater acts of sin may be numbered by man, but he only that numbers the stars can number all our sins. We commit many sins of ignorance, and we are ignorant of some of our sins of knowledge; we commit known sins which we do not know that we have committed.

And as God only knows the number, so the greatness and the aggravations of our sins. Who can understand his errors? (Psa. 19. 12.) He means practical, not doctrinal errors. As these errors or wanderings are beyond our numbering, so also beyond our understanding. As there is a height and a depth in the love of God which passeth our knowledge; so there is an height and a depth of wickedness in our hearts which passeth our knowledge. The Lord only can shew us how sinful we are, as he only can shew us how gracious himself is.

Further, The multiplication of terms in this passage is considerable, *How many are mine iniquities and my sins make me to know my transgression and my sin.* Here are three Original words, by which Job doth express the same thing. 1. iniquity. 2. transgression. 3. sin. The Latines give us four, and they labour much to find out a material distinction in this verbal distinction; or to shew how iniquity, transgression and sin, as also how sin in the first clause, and sin in the second differ.

The first word which we translate *iniquity*, signifies a perverseness and crookedness of spirit: or those sins which have a peculiar crookedness and perverseness in them. The second signifies any the least aberration from the way or rule of holiness in our actions, though our hearts stand right: every step beside the line is sin. The word in the second clause, which we translate *transgression*, signifies *rebellion and obstinacy of spirit*, the risings of our thoughts against God.

The Latines make out the distinction thus, By *iniquities*, they understand those evils which are committed against our neighbour. By *sins*, those which a man commits against himself. By *transgressions*, those which are immediately against God: And by sin in the fourth place, *Omissions*; as if he had said, Lord, shew me mine iniquities, any evil I have committed against others: shew me my sins, those which I have committed against my self: shew me my transgressions, the rebellions of my life against thy Majesty: And shew me my sins, all my neglects to perform, or negligent performances

iniquitas
Per errorem et
missa iniquitas
sunt propria
perversitates;
sinus
est defectio
et rebellium
significat. Mir.

Latini utuntur
quatuor distin-
ctis verbis &
curiosius inter
hoc discrimen
constituere ni-
tuntur. 1. iniqui-
tas in proximu.
2. peccata in se
3. scelera in Deu
4. delicta omissi-
ones: Lyan.
Aquin, paulo
caliser.

of holy duties : spread all before my face. This hath a truth in it : yet the holy Ghost doth not observe such a distinctness in these words, but useth much variety and liberty in their application.

Sometimes sin, which goes lowest in ordinary signification, is an aggravation : (*Hos. 12. 8.*) *In all my labours they shall find none iniquity in me, that were sin*, as if sin here were more then iniquity, or great iniquity. Sometimes iniquity is put as an aggravation upon sin (*Psal. 32. 5.*) *Thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin* : that is, the sinfulness of my sin, or those considerations which have rendred my sin out of measure sinful. Now, seeing there is such a promiscuous use of these words in Scripture, we cannot clearly establish or build upon such a difference.

*Est coaccervatio
quadam artifi-
cio plenat. Nam
sicut ejusdem
vocis repetitio,
ita etiam pluri-
marum eandem
rem significanti-
um accervatio
vim solet addere
orationi. San.*

Therefore passing by those critical nicities, I shall take the words as *Synonyms*, signifying one and the same thing ; yet being thus joyned, they signifie more than any one singly can. For as the repeating of the same words heightens the sence, so also doth the heaping up of divers words which have the same sence. So that this Rhetorical accervation intimates *Jobs* earnest desire that all his sins, by what name or title soever distinguished, might be produced and made known unto him. *Let my iniquities, my transgressions, my sins*, call them what you will, let them all be presented to my face. When God proclaims his pardoning mercy, he heapt up these words in his own title, calling himself *the Lord, the Lord gracious, &c. pardoning iniquity, transgression and sin* : Lest any breach of the Law might be thought unpardonable, all the words which imply a breach are used in the proclamation of pardon. And while *Job* would here shew both his repentance and his innocency, that he was far from hiding any darling sin in his bosome, he begs the discovery of whatsoever bare the name, or had the nature of sin in his heart or life.

Hence Observe,

First, *That the better any man is, the more willing he is to know the worst of himself.*

He who is light in the Lord, is willing to see his dark part as well as his light. Some are very desirous others should know the good they have done, but they cannot abide to be shewed the evil which themselves have done. The Pharisee (*Luk. 18.*) publisheth to all, how he paid tithes and gave alms, how he fasted and prayd,

prayd, &c. but he spake not a word, either of confessing his known sins, or begging a sight of what he did not know. Solomon perceived that this spirit of self-flattery possessed many in his time (*Prov. 20. 6.*) *Most men will proclaim every one his own goodness, but a faithful man who can find? Hypocrites labour much to shew others their goodness: The sincere labour more to see their own vile ness.* A godly man finds delight only in the knowledge of his graces, but he finds profit in the knowledge of his corruptions. We are pleased only with the sight of friends, or of wife and children in our houses, but if a thief be got in, we thank him that shews us who and where he is. There are two things which argue a gracious frame of spirit: First, when we desire to know how frail we are; secondly, when we desire to know how sinfull we are. A natural man loves not to take notice either of the infirmities of his body, or of the presumptions of his soul: And though some wicked men will say, from a spirit of impudence; they care not who knows their iniquities, transgressions and sins, yet no wicked man ever did or can say, from a spirit of repentance, Lord, make me to know mine iniquities, my transgressions and my sins. A carnal heart is more willing that others should know his sins, then he is (under this notion of knowledge) to know them himself; he knows them in the history or matter of fact, with a kind of delight, it sometime pleases him to remember the evil which he hath done: but he cannot abide to know them in their nature, it never pleases him to repent of the evil which he hath done.

Secondly, Observe,

Whilest Christ is known to us, we need not be afraid to have our sins known to us.

To know sin, and not to know Christ is sad. One sin seen without a sight of Christ swallows up the soul: but a sight of Christ swallows up all our sins. None can be truly willing that God should shew them their sins, but they to whom God hath shewed a Saviour. Job had said, *He shall be my salvation*, before he said, *shew me my transgression.* When we have seen heaps upon heaps of mercy in God, we cannot despair (though we ought to grieve) when we see heaps upon heaps of sin in our selves. *Heaps of mercy cast down or cover heaps of sin.* All our mountains of sin become mole-hills, yea, plains before this *Zerubbabel.*

Again, It is remarkable, that Job having asked the question,
How

How many are mine iniquities? follows it preſently with this petition, *Make me to know my tranſgreſſion and my ſin* : As if he had ſaid, I may ſee my ſins how many they are, or that they are very many, and yet not know what any one of them is, without thy ſpecial teaching. Hence Obſerve,

Our ſins may be told us, or we may have the tale of our ſins, and yet not know our ſins.

It is harder to know the nature, than the number, what, then how many our ſins are. Every man (who knows any thing of the ſtate of man) knows he is a ſinner, but few know their ſins. Chriſt is preached to all, yet Chriſt is not known to all : There is much in this, *Make me to know*. To know ſin, is to be ſenſible of the evil of ſin, as to know Chriſt is to have a feeling of Chriſt, and to taſte how ſweet the Lord Chriſt is. We may hear of our ſins all our daies, and yet not know our ſins : It is poſſible for a man to write down catalogues of his ſins, and to keep a record of them every day, and yet not to know them, not only not ſo far as to mourn for them after a godly ſort, but not ſo far as to be affected with them after a moral ſort, or ſo far as an ingenious man might be. It is one thing to know our tranſgreſſions, another thing to write our tranſgreſſions or to ſpeak of them. For, as ſome have whole books written full of *Sermon-notes* : By them, who have not one line of a Sermon written in their hearts, or upon their waies ; ſo a man may have whole books written full of *ſin-notes*, and yet not one ſin making impreſſion upon his heart. *There are but few who know what they know.*

There is a threefold knowledge of ſin.

Fiſt, In the kind of it, that this or that is ſinful, this knowledge of ſin comes not from our ſelves. There are many actings which we do not know to be ſinnings, till God makes us know them. Some things wherein we thought we did God good ſervice, we may find our ſelves tranſgreſſors in them.

Secondly, There is a knowledge of ſin in the nature of it, that it is a tranſgreſſion of the law, and a departure from God : That it is a filthy and a polluted thing, a baſe and diſhonourable thing ; that it is nothing that is good, and all that's evil ; that it is ſo evil that we cannot make it worſe then it is, nor call it by any name ſo bad as its own, *Sinful ſin*.

Thirdly, There is a knowledge of ſin in the effects and iſſues of it : That as it is filthy, ſo it defiles ; that as it is a pollution, ſo it pollutes

obscures every thing that toucheth it: That, as it is base and dishonourable in it self, so it doth embase and dishonour every soul that commits it, much more those that love it: That it is big with and brings forth death, that it is fruited with damnation, that it is armed with all the curses written in the Book of God against sinners: That the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against it, and shall be poured out upon it for ever, unless we have part in the blood of Christ, which was poured out to wash and save us from it. We never know sin thus till God makes us know it. Sin is as a fire to consume, as a serpent to sting and poyson us, yet sinful man esteems it but as a fire or as a serpent painted upon a wall, or set upon a sign-post, which though they have the colour, yet they have not the heat of fire, nor the poyson of a serpent. *Grace only gives us the true sense of our own sin:* And he who hath received the largest measures of the grace of God, had need to be instant in prayer with the God of grace, *to make him know his transgression and his sin.*

JOB Chap. 13. Vers. 24, 25.

*Wherefore hidest thou thy face, and holdest me for thine enemy?
Wilt thou break a leaf driven to and fro? and wilt thou pursue the dry stubble?*

WE need not labour much for the connection of these words, which are indeed a continued description of the sorrows of a troubled spirit. Some joyn them with the request made in the former verse, thus, *How many are mine iniquities and my sins? make me to know my transgression and my sin. Wherefore hidest thou thy face?* As if he had said, *Forasmuch as I proposing this to thy Majesty, to discover the worst and darkest part of me, and yet thou dost not bring forth any accusation, or lay any crime to my charge, seeing by thy silence thou seemest to acquit me of being reperiſſe, culpable of any such transgression as my friends have suspected me of, Wherefore is it that thou hidest thy face, and holdest me for thine enemy? If indeed thou couldst produce against me any studied wickedness, or arraign me at thy bar for an hypocrite, then I should see reason*

Cum à me rogatus (O summe iudex) ut si quæ sunt apud te recondita mea velis, taces on- nino, sane videris tuo illo si- lentio testari, nihil tale in me igitur abscondi- faciam? et mecum tanquam cum inimico agis?
Aquin.

reason enough, why thou, who art of purer eyes then to behold any unclean things, shouldst hide thy face from me in such uncleanness, & were I such an one, I might see reason enough why thou shouldst count me as an enemy, or never own me as a friend. But forasmuch as that not only appeareth not, but indeed is not, I now further desire to understand what is the cause why thou hidest thy face from me, and why thou holdest me as thine enemy.

Verse 24. *Wherefore hidest thou thy face, and holdest me for thine enemy?*

The words are not so much a question, as an expostulation, which is a very vehement opening of the heart to let out the grief that lieth there: Yet *Job* keeps within the bounds of duty and holy modesty: he did not invade the prerogative of God whilest he thus asked an account of him. We must here take in a double supposition, that we may clear *Job*. First, That he knew God had a reason why he hid his face from him. Secondly, We must suppose, that in case the Lord should still hide the cause from him why he did hide his face from him, yet *Job* was resolved to sit down and honour God even in that darkness about his own condition: for without these suppositions, to put questions, much more to put expostulations upon God, is unbecoming the state of the creature, much more of a Believer. We must say God hath just cause for whatsoever he doth, and he doth not wrong us, if he refuse to shew us the cause, though we request him to shew it us.

Wherefore hidest thou thy face?

Here are two things to be opened.

First, What is meant by *the face of God*.

Secondly, What hiding his face doth mean.

This phrase [*The face of God*] must be understood by that common figure, an *Anthropopathy*; God is often spoken of in Scripture after the manner of men; sometimes inward passions, sometimes (as here) outward parts are ascribed to him.

The face of God is put First, For the essential glory of God. *Quare Divinitatem tuam subducis?* (Exod. 33. 13.) When *Moses* desired to see the glory of God, the Lord telleth him, vers. 20. *Thou canst not see my face, for there is no man can see my face and live. Thou canst not see my face, that is, my essential glory, thou maiest see my declarative or my manifestative glory, the glory of my attributes, as they are expressed in that* procla-

proclamation of his great Name. The face of God, as taken for his essential glory, is alwaies hid, it is an object too pure and spiritual for the eye, and too high for the understanding of a creature.

Secondly, the face of God signifies the general presence of God: and so when God hides his face, he denies us the comfortable enjoyment of his presence.

Thirdly, and more particularly, The face of God signifies the anger and wrath of God (*Lev. 20. 6.*) *The ſoul that turneth after ſuch as have familiar ſpirits, and after wizards, ſo go a whoring after them, I will even ſet my face againſt that ſoul, and will cut him off from among his people.* And in the *Pſalms* often the Lord is ſaid to ſet his face, that is, to manifeſt his diſpleaſure againſt wicked men. The face of God, ſignifies alſo the favour of God, the good will of God. ſo in this place, and *Pſ. 18. 19. 1 Sam. 13. 12. Numb. 6. 25. Dan. 9. 17.* both theſe, the anger and the favour of God are called the face of God, becauſe the anger and the favour of men appear in their faces. Man can form his face into the ſignification of either of theſe, into an angry look, or into a pleaſing look: we may ſee wrath, or we may ſee love printed upon the countenance. Hence the favour and the anger of God are expreſſed by the face of God. *Job* complaineth that the favour of God, the light of his countenance was hidden from him.

Hideſt.

The hiding of the face of God may be conſidered either as it is, or as we apprehend it to be. His face is never hid, but to our apprehenſions. In his diſpenſations, there are the hidings, and there are the diſcoverings of his face, there are the ſhuttings, and there are the openings of his love. Further, the hiding of the face implies two things.

Fiſt, Diſpleaſure, A man turneth away his face from thoſe with whom he is diſpleaſed.

Secondly, Diſdain, We turn from thoſe we ſleight: and to turn the back upon a man is a real ſleighting. Where we will not look, we do not love. As the Prophet ſaid to a great King, (*2 Kin. 3. 14.*) *Were it not that I regard the preſence of Jehoiſaphat ſon of the King of Judah, I would not look toward thee nor ſee thee.* So here, *Wherefore hideſt thou thy face?* is, why art thou ſo angry with me? why doſt thou ſleight me, as if I were not worth a look or a caſt

*tratorum more
qui eos quibus
ſuſcensens af-
picere dedig-
nantur, Merc.
Faciem aver-
tere indignantiſ
eſt & ſupplici-
um infernalis,
convertere be-
nevolentiſ &
benefacientiſ
eſt, Pine.*

of thine eye: A man in misery usually saith, *Pray look upon me.*

*Antiqua erat
consuetudo,
quod cum iudi-
ces capitis sen-
tentiam latu-
rant interjecto
velo se contin-
ebant absconditi.
Hujus meminit,
Basil. Ep. 79.*

Again, This also, (as some interpreters conceive) hath reference to a judiciary proceeding: *Speak thou; and I will answer, or, I will speak, and answer thou me, Wherefore hidest thou thy face?* When a Magistrate finds a business foul against a man, he turns away from him. Some of the Antients refer it to a known custome of the Judges in those times, who when they pronounced sentence of condemnation, caused a curtain to be drawn before them, or, hid their faces from the condemned party; for as the covering of a mans face was a token that he was condemned, so they who condemned them covered their own faces; Of which custome see more upon those words, *cap. 9. ver. 24. He covereth the faces of the Judges thereof, &c.* And whether the usages of former times, in judiciary proceedings, give any light to this text or no, yet the general scope and intendment of it is plainly thus, *Wherefore, O Lord, dost thou put thy self into an angry posture against me? why are all the appearances from Heaven to my soul black and lowering? why is it that I see not those former smiles in thy face? why am I not received into the embraces of thy arms? why dost thou all the wrathful Judge, who art indeed a loving Father? As my soul hath delighted in thy forepassed kindnesses, so it desires to know, with all humble submission to thy will, why thou grievest me now with this unkindness, the hiding of thy face? Tell me Lord, tell me, wherefore hidest thou thy face from me?*

Hence Observe,

First, *That holy men even in this life have a sight of the face of God.*

Wherefore hidest thou thy face? It was not usual with God to hide his face, Job had seen it, else he would not have complained because he could not see it. We are not much troubled at the want of that whereof we never had any experience nor enjoyment. We are not at all troubled at the non-enjoyment of that of whose being, or whether there be such a thing or no, we are altogether ignorant. Job saw God did not deal with him as he was wont, nor do to him after the manner of a friend. God had been familiar with him, and given him frequent visits, this made him so sensible of his present shieness and estrangements. *Chapt. 10. ver. 12. Thy visitation hath preserved my spirit.* When friends visit, they see one anothers faces. It is said of the two Kings

Kings (2 *Kin.* 14. 8.) that the one ſent to the other, ſaying, *Come, let us look one another in the face*; that is, Let us have an interview. The ſoul of a Believer hath interviews with God, God and he do often look one another in the face. Whereſoever the Saints are (except in caſes of deſertion) the place may be called, as *Jacob* called that where he wrangled with God, (*Gen.* 32. 30.) *Peniel*, that is, *the face of God*: yet not in that ſenſe fully in which *Jacob* calls it ſo; He called it the *face of God*, becauſe he had ſeen God *face to face*. We call it ſo only (ordinarily) becauſe we ſee his face; It is one thing to ſee *the face of God*, and another thing to ſee *God face to face*. The former is the common priviledge of Saints in this life, the later is very rarely given the Saints here, or it is the priviledge of but ſome Saints, and thoſe rare ones, to have it here.

There is a twofold ſight or viſion of God.

First, A viſion of grace; Secondly, a viſion of glory. Glory is nothing elſe, but the viſion of God; (*1 Job.* 3. 1.) *We ſhall ſee him as he is*. Both theſe ſights of God are expreſſed by one phraſe of ſpeech, in the Hebrew of the old Teſtament, and in the Greek of the new, and we tranſlate both by ſeeing God *face to face*. So *Jacob* profeſſed in the place now cited, that he had ſeen God; and the Apoſtle promiſeth that we ſhall ſee him ſo, (*1 Cor.* 13. 12.) where he alſo compares the ſight of God here to ſeeing in a glaſs darkly, and calls the ſight of him in Heaven, a ſeeing of God *face to face*. Now the reaſon why ſome of the Saints (as *Jacob* and *Moses*) are ſaid to *ſee God face to face* in this life, which the Apoſtle appropriates to the next, is this, as I conceive, becauſe thoſe ſights of God which *Jacob* and *Moses* had were immediate, God in an extraordinary manner coming down to wrangle with *Jacob*, and calling up *Moses* in an extraordinary manner to ſpeak with him in the mount; Theſe diſpenſations being (*preludia gloriae*) the foreactings of a glorified eſtate, are ſet forth by that act which is peculiar and proper unto the ſtate of glory, *The ſeeing of God face to face*. But, as for the uſual manifeſtations of God to believers in this life, they are only the ſeetings of his face.

So then we muſt diſtinguiſh of the viſions of God in this life. Some are extraordinary, ſuch was that of *Jacob* and *Moses*, ſuch was that of the Prophet (*Iſa.* 6. 5.) and *Job* (chap. 42. 5.) By all theſe God was ſeen (in this ſenſe) *face to face*. There

are also ordinary manifestations of God, in which only the face of God is seen. And those may be referred to three heads.

First, We see his face in the glass of the Word, there we have a vision of God: hence the preaching of the word is called vision, (Prov. 29.18.) *Where there is no vision the people perish.*

Secondly, We see the face of God in the glass of his works. What God is, appears in what God doth. God needs not subscribe his name to his works (as men do) to shew that he is the Author of them, for his works are his name, and in what work soever his hand hath been, his face is seen. Especially in those three great works, first, in the work of creation (Rom. 1. 20.) *The invisible things of him from the creation of the World, are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made.* Secondly, In the works of Providence. And this even in the common works of providence, our daily support and protection, the constant recourse of seasons and times, of nights and daies; Ps. 19. 1. *The Heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handy work; day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge,* that is, the providences and turnings of every day, declare the glory of God, and shew his handy-work; but chiefly in wonderful providences, in his great deliverances and miraculous operations for his people, is God seen. Thirdly, In the work of Redemption, in which the face of God is more seen than in both the former, even his manifold wisdom; Ephesians 3. 10.

Thirdly, We see the face of God in the Ordinances of his worship, in them we have the most visible visions of God in this life. For this sight holy David was athirst, Psal. 63. 2. *O God thou art my God, &c. My soul thirsteth for thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is, to see thy power and thy glory so as I have seen thee in the Sanctuary.* The sight of God in the Sanctuary, is through the Ordinances and worship of the Sanctuary. God is seen in his works, but he is seen more in his word, in that as in a glass with open face we behold the glory of the Lord, till we are changed into the same image (2 Cor. 3. 18.) The sight of God is a transforming sight, we cannot see what he is, and be what we are. The beauty of God shines in his Ordinances, and that beauty beheld, doth not only reflect upon, but assimilate the beholder. Hence David again (Ps. 27. 4.) makes it the chiefest and the choicest, the one and the only thing of all his desires, *One thing have I desired*

fired of the Lord, that will I ſeek after, that I may dwell in the houſe of the Lord all the daies of my life; what to do? To behold the beauty of the Lord. Where doth beauty ſit? Beauty ſits in the face, and therefore to behold the beauty of the Lord, is to behold the face of the Lord. Theſe are the ordinary viſions of God in this life, or the ſeeing of his face: and when the Lord is pleaſed to give any of his ſpecial favourites extraordinary and immediate maniſeſtations of himſelf (which as he did to ſome Saints before the coming of Chriſt, ſo he can renew it (when he pleaſeth, and ſees it fitting) to believers now) when, I ſay, God gives immediate maniſeſtations of himſelf, they may be ſaid to ſee God face to face, becauſe ſuch maniſeſtations are the firſt-fruits of glory, or glympſes of Heaven before we come to Heaven, where we ſhall as fully, and as clearly as a finite nature can take in an infinite, ſee God face to face.

Now, as unbelievers ſhall never ſee God face to face in glory: ſo they know not what it means to ſee his face in waies of grace. And therefore they entertain it with a kind of ſcorn, when it is reported that any man hath ſeen the face of God; this is a ſtrange language to the men of the world, who live without God in the world. They who live without God in the world, live without God in the Church: and we are as Barbarians to them, they underſtand not what we ſay, when we ſay we have ſeen God in prayer, or at the word, in private duties, or in publick aſſemblies. In theſe, believers ſee the face of God, they who do not, do nothing in any of theſe. Our buſineſs in ſuch duties is to ſee God: we come not to ſee one another, or to ſee the walls and ornaments of the place we meet in, we come not (as the Diſciples ſpoke, wondering at the ſabrick of the Temple) to ſee what manner of ſtones and buildings are there; but to ſee what a holy and gracious God is there; and when the worſhippers in ſpirit miſs this ſight, though they know their labour is not loſt, yet the comfort they expected is not gained, and therefore they mourn, yea, humbly complain, *Wherefore hideſt thou thy face?*

Secondly, Obſerve,

That God doth ſometimes withdraw himſelf, and hide his face from his choiceſt ſervants.

It is the ſole privilege of the Saints to ſee the face of God, but they live not alwaies in the enjoyment of that privilege: (*Iſa. 8. 17. I will wait upon the Lord that hideth his face from the*

house of Jacob, and I will look for him. The Saints are now the *house of Jacob*, the eye, yea the heart of God is ever upon this house, yet he sometimes hideth his face from it. Then the Lord hideth his face, when he doth not enlighten as formerly, when he doth not enliven as formerly, when he doth not assist in doing as formerly, when he doth not support in suffering as formerly, when there is a withdrawing of these, or in any of these, then God is said to hide his face from the house of *Jacob*; *David* often bemoans himself under these hidings. And the Prophet puts the case in general, that such as fear the Lord, and obey the voice of his Servants, may yet walk in darkness & see no light (*Iſa* 50. 10) we never want light in our spirits, till the face of God is hid from us, as we never want light in our eyes till the Sun is hidden from us: but why doth God hide his face from his choicest servants? *Job* a choice servant of his asks the reason, wherefore hidest thou thy face far from me? I shall (upon that occasion, and the clearing of this Scripture) answer it in some particulars.

First, The Lord hides his face sometimes, because he will hide his face. What if God should have answered *Job* when he enquired, *Wherefore hidest thou thy face?* It is my pleasure. God may do it by prerogative, and neither ask us leave, nor give us the reason why. *As he will have mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardneth* (*Rom.* 9. 18.) so he may say, I shew my face to whom I will, and from whom I will I hide it.

But, Secondly, He hideth his face at one time, because he intendeth to shew it more clearly at another. When he means shortly to give the soul a full sight of himself, he gives it at present no sight of himself; when he is about to pour out abundance of love into a bosome, he quite withdraws the sense of his love.

Thirdly, Undervaluings of former manifestations are often chastened with after hidings.

Fourthly, God denies his presence, that we may prize his presence, and pray more earnestly for it.

Fifthly, When we value the face of the World too much, God hides his face. When we are desirous to make a fair shew in the flesh, God will not shew himself to our spirits. Our dalliance with the creature causeth God to look off from us, or to look strangely upon us. The heart of a godly man may get a haunt to some vanity here below, and then God restrains vision from a-

bove

bove. He ſhews us the wandrings & out-lyings of our affections, by the withdrawings and vailings of his own. We cannot love God till he ſhews us his face, and after we have ſeen it vve cannot but love him; yet they who have ſeen him, and love him, may for a time be overtaken with the love of the World, and then God will not be ſeen. Every opening of our ſelves to the world is a hiding of our ſelves from God. When we hide our faces from God, no wonder if God hide his face from us.

Sixthly, When we hide our faces from the waies, or from the people of God, God will hide his face from us. Some who have had communion with God, and have ſeen his face, may (under a temptation, or upon a guſt of carnal fear) if not withdraw from, yet ſcarce own the people or the waies of God; yea poſſibly they may ſet their faces againſt ſome of the waies of God. When it is ſo with them, God will ſurely hide his face from them. Apoſtates draw back totally from profeſſion, when they perceive they cannot bring forward their own profit or other private intereſts by their profeſſion, and of ſuch the Lord hath ſaid, *My ſoul ſhall have no pleaſure in them,* (Heb. 10. 38.) True Believers may draw back partially, or in part, and when they do ſo, God will make them know that vvhile they are in ſuch a baſe temper his ſoul hath no pleaſure in them, and therefore hides his face from them.

As theſe or the like are cauſes in us vvhy God hides his face, ſo he hath gracious deſigns upon us, vvwhich he effects by hiding his face. Chiefly theſe two,

Fiſt, To try us: *There is no greater trial of grace than the withdrawing of comfort;* and in that ſtate vvhere vve ſhall have a conjunction of all comfort, vve ſhall never be put to the trial of any grace; yea, the graces vvwhich act in trials ſhall have no exiſtence there. Faith, and hope, and patience, have no place in Heaven, becauſe they have no vvork in Heaven: And they have no vvork there, becauſe God vvill never hide his face, and Satan ſhall never ſhev his face there. For betvveen the appearing of Satans face, and the hiding of Gods face, lieth the vvork of theſe graces. (Iſa. 8. 17.) *I will wait upon God who hideth his face:* there's the trial of patience, to keep cloſe to God, vvhen God ſeemeth to depart from us.

Secondly, God hides his face that we might be in love vvith that ſtate vvhere his face ſhall never be hid. 'Tis beſt of all to be diſſolved

dissolved, and to be with Christ, because then we and our joyes shall never be divided. That joy which depends upon changeable things must needs be changeable. The joy of Heaven is a dependent joy, yet because God on whom it depends will never change a look towards us, therefore our joy shall be unchangeable. If the Sun did alwaies continue the same aspect upon the Moon which it doth at the full, the Moon (though hers be a dependent and a borrowed light) would ever continue at the full, and know no change. God will not vary his aspect towards the Saints in Heaven, for one moment to all eternity; and therefore the joy of Saints in Heaven will be for ever at the full. There is a double difference between the manifestation of God here upon earth, and in Heaven. First, A difference in the degree, the manifestations in Heaven are clearer; here *in a glass*, there *face to face*, as the Apostle speaks. Secondly, The manifestations of God to the Saints in Heaven are without intermission, there shall not come one cloud between the face of God and our souls for ever. Hence, as the holiness, so the joy of the Saints in Heaven shall be the same for ever. Now God hides his face, and puts us to this question, *Wherefore hidest thou thy face?* that we may long for that estate where this question shall never be put, *Wherefore hidest thou thy face?*

Thirdly, Observe,

That it is a great affliction to the soul when the face of God is hid.

Wherefore hidest thou thy face? As if he had said, Lord; I could suffer any affliction, yea, all afflictions better than this one: *Job* was not a type of Christ (as I have touch'd before) but as in many things, so in this, his spirit and his condition were very parallel, or like to Christ. When Christ was upon the Cross, he cried out, and put this question, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* Such was *Job's* cry, *Why hidest thou thy face from me?* As Christ upon the Cross, so *Job* upon the dunghill had a body full of pains, but he passeth by these, and only complains of the sufferings of his soul in the hidings of his Fathers face. Here was the pinch, *Why hidest thou thy face from me?* The Lord threatens, *Deut. 32. 20. I will hide my face from them, I will see what their end shall be:* Certainly no good end if God hide his face. He speaks in reference to temporal or outward things, *I will hide my face from them*, that is, I will withdraw my protecting presence, my woulted

worsted influence and assistance, or as he tels them (*Jer. 23. 27.*) *I will shew them the back and not the face in the day of their calamity.* When I have done this, then I will see what their end *(shall be)*. Though God be not seen, yet he can see; having hid himself, and left a sinful people to shift for themselves, he then (as it were) warches, like *Moses* liker when he was put into his boat of bulrushes (*Exod. 2. 4.*) to see what will become of them. God knows the end from the beginning, and looks quire through all causes into their issues, yet thus he speaks after the manner of men, who cannot see an hour before them, *I will see what their end shall be*. God sees they must needs come to a miserable end, whose waies he will not vouchsafe to see. Much more is this true in regard of our inward and spiritual estate; if God hide his face, he seeth what the end will be, even anguish and sorrow, trouble and vexation of spirit. What can that soul see but visions of darkness, which hath no vision of God, who alone is light. After the people had said (*Hos. 6. 2.*) *Let us return unto the Lord, for he hath torn, and he will heal us,* he adds, *After two daies he will revive us, in the third day he will raise us up, and we shall live in his sight.* In his sight, which some interpret, *when God brings us into his sight, or into a sight of him, we shall live;* that is, our lives will be sweet unto us, we shall recover when God appears to us, and gives us evidence that we are accepted with him. A sight of the face of God is the happiness and life of man. As no man can see the essential face of God and live, so no man can live comfortably, unless he see the providential face of God. It is observed, that the heathens exceedingly desired a sight of their gods, and that they might see them, they invented images, and set up statues to represent the gods; that so they might see whom they worshipped, and at once behold and adore their dunghill-deities. They knew no way of seeing their gods but by their sense, and therefore they made sensible gods. They would rather have gods with eyes that could not see, then not see their gods with their eyes. Yea, I find a learned Christian among the ancients giving this as one reason why Christ took our nature upon him, and so became God manifested in the flesh, that, God who in himself is altogether invisible, might be visible in his Son; God is more visible in Christ, then he is in all creatures. The Apostle calleth him *the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person* (*Heb. 1. 3.*) Jesus Christ is the brightness, the

Gentiles ob hoc simulacra fixerunt ut oculis cernerent quod colebant.

Chrylogus hinc argumentatur incarnationis causam, ut se invisibilis deus faceret visibilem satis faceret, amari, qui quod

forth-light, the beams or splendour of his Fathers glory, and the imprinted image of his essence or person (for the words are a metaphor drawn from a lightsome body, which sends forth beams of light, and from a seal that leaves its own impression or image where it is stampd, I say) Christ Jesus is all this, not only in regard of his divine nature, and eternal generation, but also in respect of his incarnation, and sending in the similitude of sinfull flesh. For in Christ manifested in the flesh, the glory and excellency of God the Father shined forth; who as he is in himself altogether invisible, so he is in nothing so visible as in his Son our Lord Jesus Christ; and therefore all the former waies of manifesting God under the Law, have been laid by and disused, since God manifested himself to us by his Son: the excellency of this being so great beyond the former, that to look for them would be but like calling for star-light after the Sun is risen, as the Apostles way of argumentation doth clearly evidence, in the first of the *Hebrews*, ver. 1, 2, 3. But to return to the point (from which I have upon the overture of this notion a little digressed.) It appears by all this, that the manifestation of God to the soul, is our highest both privilege and comfort, and that the hidings of his face are our greatest both loss and sorrow.

There are four particulars from which I shall briefly evidence this yet further.

First, The need, or rather the absolute necessity we stand in of the presence and favour of God. It is needfull for us to have the creature, but there is a necessity that we should enjoy God. God is enough for us without any creature, but all creatures are nothing to us without God; God and all that he hath made, is not more than God without any thing that he hath made.

Secondly, All our profits come in at the door of divine favour and munificence. And having God we have all; He that hath the fountain hath the stream, he that hath the Mine hath the gold and silver. He that hath the Sun hath the light; Whilst we enjoy communion with God, we enjoy the fountain, the Mine, the Sun of all enjoyments. We say *there is no fishing to the sea*, because the sea hath the vastest capacity, there's fish enough in the sea to fill all our nets, and to lade all our vessels: we may say infinitely more truly, there is no enjoyment to the enjoyment of God, God hath enough not only to supply all our needs, but to satisfy all our desires. The best of meer creatures is but a particular good.

All

All creatures are not an univerſal good. *The One, the One-moſt God is all good. God will be hereafter, and he can be now, All in all unto us.*

Thirdly, Nothing is ſo honourable to man as the enjoyment of God. It is an honour to a common man when he is admitted to the preſence of a great man. If a Prince (who is but man in a great letter) ſpeak kindly to us, and ſhew us any countenance, we think our ſelves honoured not a little: what is it then for the great God of heaven to ſhew us his face, and give us countenance?

Fourthly, It is joy and delight unſpeakable to enjoy the face of God. One of the Roman Emperours was of ſo amiable a temper and compoſure that he was called *The Delight of mankind: God is indeed the delight of Saints.* The joy of glory is this, *We ſhall ever be with the Lord; the joy of grace is, When the Lord is with us.* We may have grace, but we can have no joy, when God hides his face from us; and he that hath once ſeen the face of God, can never give over asking, knocking, praying, begging, till the Lord reſtore unto him the light of his countenance, and the joy of his ſalvation. *Wherefore hideſt thou thy face?*

And holdeſt me for thine enemy.

We may expound this latter clauſe by the former: Surely *thou holdeſt me for an enemy, elſe why doſt thou hide thy face from me?*

Holdeſt.

The word ſignifies the eſteem or account which we have either of perſons or of things (Gen. 31. 15.) *Are we not counted of him ſtrangers?* ſay the wives of Jacob, in reference to their Father Laban; he deals with us as if we had not been born in his family, or as if he had no relation to us. So here, *Thou counteſt me, or, thou holdeſt me for thine enemy,* that is, thou carrieſt it as if thou hadſt nothing at all to do with me upon terms of friendſhip, as if thou hadſt no acquaintance with me; or hadſt never ſeen me before: yea, thou dealeſt with me, not only as with a ſtranger, but as with an enemy; not only as if thou didſt not know me, but as if thou didſt hate me.

By nature we are all enemies to God, (Rom. 5. 10.) *Whileſt we were yet enemies; Chriſt died for us.* Yea, we are his hearty enemies or enemies with our hearts: we hate God naturally, as we ſhould love him ſpiritually, with all our might, and all our mind.

mind. *We were enemies in our minds, or, by our minds, by reason of wicked works.* (Col. 1. 21.) Job was once such an enemy, but he knew he had been reconciled unto God by the death of his Son in the promise, and so was become his friend. Job knew he was justified and pardoned, that God was his God in covenant, and therefore it was strange to him to receive the usage of an enemy. Is this thy kindness to thy friend, to number him among thine enemies?

For thine enemy.

*hynas dō m's
s' m'vartioy
soi's
Putas me tibi
contrarium.
Sept.
Ita me percussit
ut soles quos
inimicos judi-
casti. Sic caro
judicat in crucc.
Merc.*

An enemy is, first, one whom we hate; secondly, He is one who hath done or attempts to do us wrong; thirdly, an Enemy is one whom we oppose, and seek to destroy. Job seems to have this thought, that God had all these thoughts of him. *Thou holdest me for thine enemy*, that is, as one whom thou hatest, as one that had done thee wrong, as one whom thou opposest and wouldst destroy. *Thus the flesh judges even in those who are more than flesh.* The rule of love given by Christ is, *Love your enemies*, if thine enemy hunger, feed him, if he thirst, give him drink: Job speaks of himself as of an enemy in a vulgar notion for as of an enemy dealt with according to the laws of nature or of nations, not according to the law of Christ or of Gospel-grace, yet God did indeed feed and comfort Job, though he outwardly dealt with him as an enemy, pulling the bread from his mouth, and stripping him of all his comforts.

Hence Observe,

First, *God acts towards some of his nearest friends as if they were his greatest enemies.*

He may not only hide his face from them, but shew his wrath against them. God wounds his with love, and he wounds those whom he loves. *Whom I love, I correct*; there is wounding in correcting. So he acted toward Jacob (Gen. 32.) *he wrestled with him*. Is it the part of a friend when he meets his friend to wrestle with him? When friends meet, they embrace and salute one another, they rejoyce and confer one with another: God wrestled with Jacob, and wrestled with him not in sport, but very roughly, he put his thigh out of joynt and made him lame for it. And as God dealt with personal Jacob, so he dealt with national Jacob, or the people of the Jews, who were his friends above all the nations of the earth, *for 30. 10. Therefore fear not them, O my servant*

Jacob,

Jacob, saith the Lord, neither be dismayed, O Israel, for I will save thee from afar, and thy seed from the land of thy captivity. This was a gracious promise that the Jews should return from Babylon. But who sent them into Babylon? or was it the part of a friend to send them into Babylon? He was God who sent them into Babylon, and himself interprets his own action (Vers. 14.) I have wounded thee with the wound of an enemy, with the chastisement of a cruel one, for the multitude of thine iniquity, because thy sins were increased. God, who wrestled with Jacob till he lamed him, smites the seed of Jacob till he wounded them; and that not with some slight wound, but with the wound of an enemy; or that is, with such wounds as an enemy is wounded with: God wounds a beloved people with the wounds of an enemy, even with such a wound as an enemy gives, and with such a wound as an enemy receives. God was not an enemy to Job, but God wounded him as if he were an enemy. The wounds of God are the wounds of a father, whose end is to correct, not to kill; he smites us as children, and counts us children whilst he is smiting us; yet he smites so hard, and wounds so deep, as if wrathful anger moved his arm to smite and wound. Great wounds are the wounds of an enemy; for, as a man is said to hate father and mother, yea, and his own life, when he regards not what they say to withhold him from the duty which he oweth to Christ, in this case (though he truly reverence father and mother) he is said to hate them; because we commonly hate those whose counsels and desires we reject, or they at least think we do so: so, a great wound is called by the Prophet the wound of an enemy, because none but enemies use to give such wounds. There is no outward condition so sad, but God sometimes puts his own into it. As a wicked man can do any thing to God but love him, he praiseth to God, he hears the Word of God; he gives an outward conformity to the Law of God, but he cannot love God: so God can do any thing against his own people, but hate them. He can impoverish them, weaken them, and wound them, he can correct and chasten them, he can speak curstly to them, and deal cruelly with them, but he cannot hate them.

Secondly, Observe,

A godly man may doubt whether God love him or no.

Where God loveth he loveth to the end. All his friends are his sons. A son is not taken for years as a servant is: once a son and ever a son,

*Ab inimico illa
lata dicitur illa
plaga quia gra-
vis est, qualem
inferre solet ini-
micus. Sanct.*

son; and because every friend of God is a son of God, therefore once a friend and ever a friend: yet, they who are for ever the friends of God, are not alwaies perswaded of the love of God. The relation cannot be lost, but the sweetness of it may. As many wicked men are high-flown in confidences that they are the friends of God, and that God useth them as friends, they are rich, and they are full, they have favour and honour in the world, above thousands of their brethren, upon these grounds they boast, *see how God loveth us*, and yet at that time God hates them and counts them as his enemies. The Jews had an high esteem of *Moses*; they trusted in *Moses*, yet Christ saith unto them (*Joh. 5. 45.*) *I will not accuse you to the Father, there is one will accuse you, even Moses in whom ye trust.* So will some glory that God is their friend, and they his favourites. But while they think they trust God, and God helps them, we may say, God whom they trust will accuse, and not only accuse, but destroy them as professed enemies. Now, as some have false persuasions that God is their friend, so others are under false suspicions that God is their enemy. An upright heart is not alwaies settled in the great truth, that God loves him, yea, he comes almost to a settlement in this great error, that God hates him. Nothing can separate us from the benefits of the love of God (*Rom. 8. 39.*) but many things may separate us from the feelings of it.

Thirdly, Observe,

To be an enemy to God is the worst of all conditions.

God is the best friend, and the worst enemy; no love like his no wrath like his: *I hate mine enemies that would not have mercy on them, bring them forth and slay them here before me.* His foot shall be his footstool. And as to be a real enemy to God, is to be in the worst condition; so to apprehend our selves enemies to God, or not in the favour of God, is a very sad condition. I have opened this point further at the 7th Chapter, vers. 11. Where *Job* complains in language near this, *Why hast thou set me at a mark against thee, so that I am a burden unto my self?* An enemy is the mark against whom we direct all our shot, and brandish all our weapons. We are all by nature enemies to God, blessed are they who through grace are his reconciled friends, *Job* having asked the question, why God hid his face, and held him as an enemy, beseeches him not to contend with him, because he was (if he was) so weak and inconsiderable an enemy.

Verse

Vers. 25. *Wilt thou break a leaf driven to and fro? and wilt thou pursue the dry stubble?*

There is a twofold consideration of this verse; First, as it stands in its own bounds. Secondly, As it relates to the words following. I shall here open it in its own compass, and onely explain the meaning of this manner of speaking.

Both parts of the Verse are proverbial, and are nearly allied in sense to that proverbial speech used by the Prophet (*Isa. 42. 3.*) repeated by Christ (*Matth. 12. 20.*) *He will not break the bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax.* To break the bruised reed, and to quench the smoking flax, is as much as to break a leaf driven to and fro, and to pursue the dry stubble. So that both these similitudes express such as are weak and unable to resist, or the adding of affliction to those who are already overburdened with affliction. That for the general.

Folium propusū concussit, secundum vulgare dictum, qui afflicto afflictionem addit. Drus.

Wilt thou break?

The word which we translate, *to break*, signifies to break terribly, or to beat a thing to powder: to break with power, or to shew much power in breaking. *Sanctified be the Lord in your hearts, and let him be your dread.* He is to be dreaded who can break all power, and whose power none can break (*Luk. 12. 4.*) *Fear him which after he hath killed, hath power to cast into hell: yea, I say unto you, fear him.* The mighty man is expressed by this word, because men of might are able to break opposers. But wilt thou mightily break that which hath no might? What's that?

Ubi est contere, confingere, aut robore se, & potentiam ostendere in aliquo confringendo.

(A leaf driven to and fro?)

Potentes dicti qui potentia sua alijs sunt formidabiles. Merc.

Wilt thou put out thy power against him that is but weakness? A leaf upon the tree is a weak thing, but a leaf shaken off the tree, driven to and fro upon the ground, is contemptible. Wilt thou break a leaf? and

Wilt thou pursue the dry stubble?

To break a leaf, and to pursue the dry stubble are one thing. And as there he speaks not barely of a leaf, but of a leaf driven to and fro, so here he compares himself not only to stubble, but to dry stubble. Stubble will consume quickly, but dry stubble is at once flame and ashes. Such a poor thing, such a nothing am I, and

Ferd eadem sententia, nisi forte Bipula, aliquid ignis, & transiens significat.

and

and wilt thou ſtrive with me? While he ſaith, wilt thou do this? he intimates that 'tis not Gods manner to do this.

Hence Obſerve,

First, God uſeth not to afflict thoſe that are afflicted, or to act his ſtrength upon thoſe who have no ſtrength.

The day of the Lord (ſaith the Prophet, *Iſa. 2. 12.*) ſhall be upon every one that is proud and lofty, and upon every one that is lifted up, and he ſhall be brought low, upon the Cedars of Lebanon, and upon the Oaks of Baſhan, and upon all the mountains, and upon the hills that are lifted up. God doth not uſe to deal with the leaves of the Oak and Cedar, but with the body and roots of the Oak and Cedar: his quarrel is not with the ſtubble which grows upon the hills and mountains, but with the hills and mountains themſelves. He loves not to humble the humbled, but the proud, nor to bring down thoſe that are low, but the lofty. 'Tis true the meanest ſinner ſhall not eſcape his judgment; but he chiefly deſires to be doing with the mighty. Usually the Lord gives ſtrength to the weak, he rarely oppoſeth the weak with his ſtrength. That's the report which the ſame Prophet makes (*Iſa. 25. 4.*) Thou Lord haſt been a ſtrength to the poor, a ſtrength to the needy in their diſtreſs (thou doſt not put out thy ſtrength againſt the poor and needy in their diſtreſs) Thou art a refuge from the ſtorm, a ſhadow from the heat (therefore ſurely thou uſeſt not to ſtorm thoſe that are in the ſtorm, or kindle a fire upon thoſe that are in the heat.) 'Tis the Lords manner to bind up the broken, not to break the broken, to heal the wounded, to comfort the mourners, to raiſe up them that are caſt down; he uſeth not to ſmite the wounded, to grieve the mourners, or to caſt them lower who are already caſt down. 'Tis the way of God to weaken the ſtrong, and to ſtrengthen thoſe that are weak.

Non eſt conve-
nient ut aliquis
fortiſſimus
oſtenderet ſuam
potentiam in re
debiliſſima.
Aquin.

Itane velis te
fortem præbere
conterendo ſolito
quod vento rap-
itur? Pin.
Contra ſolium
cul avellendo
ſatis eſt tenuiſ-
ſimus ſpiritus.
Inſurgere iube
vehementiſſimū
ventum?

Will he break a traſh, he will not.

Secondly, Job ſpeaks it as a thing unbecoming, and below the great, the mighty God, to contend with the weak.

Hence Obſerve,

It is no honour to the ſtrong to overcome the weak.

Is it an honour to the Eagle to catch a fly, or for a Lyon to kill a mouſe? Thus David beſpeaks Saul (*1 Sam. 24. 14.*) After whom iſſuſt thou, O King of Iſrael come out? After a ſtubborn dog, or after a bear? Am I a match for thee? Go rather and lead thy army againſt the Philiftines, engage with thy equals if thou wouldeſt get honour.

To

To ſee a ſtrong man fight with a childe, or conquer a woman, is it any honour to the man? The Poet of old ſaid, *Is it a glory to God to lay ſnares for man?* God is ſo much above man, that he cannot honour himſelf in oppoſing man. The ſtrongest men, compared with God, are ſo weak, that when he would get himſelf honour in oppoſing them, he uſually gives them more ſtrength, that ſo his ſtrength may be ſomewhat glorified in overcoming them. God ſets the creature on high, that his highneſs may appear in pulling them down. Strength ſubduing the ſtrong, and wiſdom beſeeching the wiſe, get a name in the world. Thus he ſaith of *Pharaoh*, *Even for this ſame cauſe have I raiſed thee up, that I might ſhew my power in thee, and that my Name may be declared in all the world* (Rom. 9. 17.) *Job* gave us a particular of Gods powerful acts (chap. 12.) and he ſhews all along that God acted his power upon men of greateſt power, *He looſeth the bands of Kings, and girdeth their loins with a girdle; He leadeth Princes away ſpoiled, and overthroweth the mighty:* he had not to do with underlings; Kings, Princes, and Counſellours, the combined ſtrength of whole kingdoms and nations, are no match for God, but theſe carry the faireſt appearances of a match, and therefore he delights to deal with them. He ſuffers *Babylon* to arrive at a great height, to be founded upon *ſeven hills*, to be counſelled by *ſeven heads*, to be defended by *ten horns*: Now when *Babylon* ſits upon ſeven hills, and becomes a beaſt having ſeven heads and ten horns, that is, abundance of wiſdom and policy, ſtore of power and outward force, even the civil power of ten kingdoms to back her, here is wiſdom and ſtrength for the wiſe and ſtrong God to glorifie himſelf upon; and therefore when *Babylon* falls, the Name of God is cried up (Rev. 19. 1.) *After theſe things* (that is, after the tragical downfall of *Babylon*) *I heard a great voice of much people in heaven ſaying, Alleluia, ſalvation, and honour, and glory, and power unto the Lord our God.* God needs not break a leaf, or purſue the ſtubble, to ſhew his power, for the tallſt and beſt rotted tree is before him but as a leaf, and the hardeſt metals but as the dry ſtubble. The viſion in *Daniel* tells us (chap. 2. 25.) that not only the *clay*, but the *iron*, the *braſs*, the *ſilver* and the *gold* (that is, the mightieſt Monarchs and Monarchies of the earth) were broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the ſummer threshing-floors, and the wind carried them away. And when at any time God

X x x

breaks

An gloria magna eſt, inſidias homini ſuppoſuiſſe Deum? Tibull.

breaks thoſe who are (comparatively to other men) but as a leaf driven to and fro, or purſues thoſe who are but as dry ſtubble; he doth it not to get himſelf honour in the acting of his breaking and purſuing power, but of his preſerving and ſaving power: for he preſerves *his* whom he thus breaks, and ſaves *his* whom he thus purſues. Yea, the very reaſon why he breaks them is, that he may preſerve them, and he purſues them upon deſign to ſave them. I may add further, that God breaks the leaf, not to ſhew his power, as to ſhew what power the leaf hath received from him: The ſtrength of a believer is never more ſeen then when he endures breaking. *God puniſteth the wicked to ſhew his power, but he afflicts the godly to ſhew their power.* That power, I mean, which he hath given them, not only to do, but to ſuffer, whether for him or from him. It were indeed no honour for God to try his ſtrength upon us, but it is a great honour for us when God at once gives and tries our ſtrength. To ſee a leaf whole in the very breaking, and flouriſh in the withering, to ſee dry ſtubble endure the flame (and like the buſh in the book of *Exodus*) to burn and not to conſume, this gives witneſs to all the world how ſtrong a weak man is by the power of God, *Being ſtrengthened with all might according to his glorious power, unto all patience and long ſuffering with joyfulneſs,* Col. 1. 11. As God never indeed breaks the bruſed reed, nor quencheth the ſmoaking flax, ſo he would never aſſay to break the bruised reed, but to ſhew that it will not break; nor would he aſſay to quench the ſmoaking flax, but to ſhew that it will not quench or go out, *till he ſend forth judgement unto victory*: as if he had ſaid, the bruised reed ſhall not break till it be made ſtrong, and the ſmoaking flax ſhall not be quenched till it be a perfect flame, that is, it ſhall never be broken, it ſhall never be quenched. Judgement brought to victory, is holineſs, or the principle of grace within us, triumphing over all temptations without us, and all corruptions within us, by the power of Jeſus Chriſt.

21. Again, A leaf or dry ſtubble are the emblems, not only of that ſort of men who are accidentally weak, but of all men in regard of their natural weakneſs. Thus the ſtrongest men are but ſtubble: And ſome conceive *Job* ſpeaking here of himſelf, not only as he was a man in affliction, whom the tempeſt of Gods wrath had ſhaken as a leaf, and the heat of troubles had parched into dry ſtubble, but he ſpeaks of himſelf as a man: and what he

ſpeaks

Aptiſſima ſimilitudine utitur Jobus ad hominis imbecillitatem notandum. Pin.

speaks of himself is applicable to mankind. *Man at his best estate is altogether vanity*, Psal. 39. He is compared indeed sometimes to a flower in the field, which hath sap and moisture, greenness and verdure in it, yet he is of so short a continuance, that even this green flower is but dry stubble: He hath a spring wherein he buddeth, and a summer wherein he is green, but his Autumn and his winter, wherein he fadeth, and his fruit falleth off, come so fast upon him, that he may call his whole life a winter, and all his daies the fall of the leaf. A godly man in reference to his spiritual estate, is like unto a tree, *whose leaf shall not wither*, Psal. 1. 3.) but in reference to his temporal estate, he is like a withered leaf: So the Prophet complains, *Isa. 64. 6. We all do fade as a leaf, and our iniquities like the wind have taken us away.*

Lastly, Note this,

The Lord is moved to pity, when we mind him of our frailty.

The intendment of Job was not to charge God with severity, but to move him to mercy. Our strongest argument to prevail with God, is to shew him our weakness: To confess our natural weakness moves him much; to confess our spiritual weakness, moves him much more. If a Pharisee come and tell him a long story of his righteousness, the Lord abhors it; but if a poor publican look upon himself as unworthy to look up to heaven, this stirs, not only compassion, but acceptance; *He went home justified rather than the other.* If you would prevail with God, hold forth your soars, your sicknesses, your diseases, your distempers, your nothingness; say, you are but smoaking flax, and brused reeds, that you are but leaves driven to and fro, and as the dried stubble. There is yet a further fence to be given of these words, as they stand in connection with the following verse, to which I pass.

Dum se Iobus solum & stipulam appellat, sibi accessum pręparat ad divinam misericordiam quam eo se facilius inflectit, ubi majorem esse videt miseriam. Sancti. Non fuit hoc Iobi mens ut quicquam voluit de Dei gloria detrabere, sed ut commemoratione tenuitatis sue & summe Dei potentie illum ad misericordiam flexeretur. Morl.

Job Chap. 13. Vers. 26, 27, 28.

For thou writest bitter things against me, and makest me to possess the iniquities of my youth.

Thou puttest my feet also in the stocks, and lookest narrowly unto all my pathes; thou settest a print upon the heels of my feet.

And be as a rotten thing consumeth, as a garment that is moth-eaten.

AT the 24th verse, Job was sadly inquisitive, *Wherefore hidest thou thy face?* &c. here he makes as sad a narrative. David (Psal. 66. 16.) invites all that fear God, *Come, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul.* Job seems to invite attention from all, while he declares what God had done against his soul, *Thou writest bitter things against me,* &c. The whole relation is carried on in a continued metaphor, alluding to a judiciary proceeding; as if himself were a guilty malefactor, and God the supreme Judge; First, Aggravating his fault, and pronouncing sentence upon him, verse 26. *Thou writest bitter things,* &c. Secondly, Executing the sentence, verse 27. *Thou puttest my feet also in the stocks.* In the close of all, Job declares the effect which that sentence pronounced and executed wrought upon him, (vers. 28.) *He as a rotten thing consumeth, as a garment that is moth-eaten.*

Thou writest bitter things against me.

God hath a double book, and both in a figure. He hath a book of his *resolved decrees*, and a book of his *acted providences*. This later (the book of his providences) is but a transcript or a copy of the former. Those huge Original volumes of love and blessings which God hath laid up in his heart for his own people, those also of wrath and judgement which he hath laid up there against his enemies from all eternity, these volumes (I say) of love or wrath, are in writing out every day, by the hand and pen of providence in the ordering of all those affairs which concern both persons and nations. Job is to be understood of this later book, the book of providence, in which God writ bitter things against him, though those bitter things compared and laid together,

ther, with the comfortable iſſues in the book of Gods decrees, were indeed, if not ſweet and pleaſant, yet very wholeſome and profitable.

Further, This writing of bitter things is alſo conceived to be an alluſion to Judges, who command the ſentence againſt offenders to be written. That which is written, is not only recorded, but eſtabliſhed. *What I have written, I have written*, ſaith Pilate, as if he had ſaid, I may ſometime recall a tranſient word, but what I have written, and is under my hand, ſhall ſtand. And writing hath a firmneſs in it, eſpecially *laws*, which tell men what they muſt do, and judgements which tell them what they muſt receive or ſuffer: So the people of God are ſaid to *execute the judgement that is written* upon the Kings and Princes who oppoſe the kingdom of Chriſt (*Pſal. 149. 8, 9.*) *To bind their Kings with chains, and their nobles with fetters of iron, to execute upon them the judgement written.* That is, written in the decrees of God, and written by the decrees of men. Thus they ſpake in the book of *Daniel*, Now, O King, eſtabliſh the decree, and ſign the writing that it may not be changed, *Dan. 6. 8.* And when the Lord would ſhew *Belſhazzar* the certainty of his approaching ruine (*Dan. 5. 24.*) he preſented unto him the plaſter of the wall of his palace, the fingers of a mans hand, which wrote over againſt the candleſtick, and this writing was written, *Mene, Tekel, &c.* A bitter thing was written againſt that Prince in the miſt of his delicious banquettings. *Thou art weighed and found too light: Thy kingdom is divided, &c.* And as in all civil nations, the ſentence of judgement is written, ſo among the Grecians, *to write* was as much as *to accuſe and impeach*: why not alſo among the Jews? *Johs* wiſh ſeems to imply it (*chap. 18. latam ſententiam per-* 11. 35.) *O that mine adverſary had written a book againſt me, that a book of accuſation, which in the civil law is called a Libell, and the act of bringing in an accuſation, Libelling.* It is the way of our law to bring in writings of inditement, or of charge againſt offenders, as well as to write the ſentence or judgement given upon it. Thus (*Jer. 32. 30.*) *Write this man childleſs* (ſaith the Lord) *a man that ſhall not proſper in his daies.* As if he had ſaid, the decree is gone out againſt him; he ſhall not ſcape.

Thou writeſt bitter things. The laws of *Deuter* are ſaid to be written in blood: and this decree of God againſt *Jeh* was he

he conceived) written with gall and worm-wood. Thou writest bitter things against me.

I find some variety of opinion about these bitter things. And there are divers ingredients to make up these pills.

First, Some expound these bitter things, of sin. *Thou writest or settest down my sins.* Thou keepest an account of all my weaknesses and transgressions. There are two who write our sins. First, *God books our sins*, that is, he knows the sins we commit as exactly, as if they were written down before him in a book. The formality of writing is infinitely below God, but the effect of writing, which is the evidencing of what is done or spoken, is alwaies before him. Secondly, *Conscience books our sins*, *Job* intends the writing of God, *Thou writest bitter things*, which some aggravate, as if *Job* did secretly tax God with severity, and had said thus: *I knew thou keepest a book, thou writest diaries and annals, the whole history of my life: but thou settest down*

little of my good works, or of what is praise-worthy, thou takest little notice of anything that might render me acceptable to thy selfe *amara* *cent* *or* *commend me to the acceptation of others: only my sins and fall-*
adversum me *ings, which are a bitterness to me, those thou settest down and keep-*
exacerbent. *est a perfect account of.* But *Job* was far from such reflexions upon
Benè facta *God*, yet we may give a safe sence upon the whole, though we in-
omittis, si quid *terpret these bitter things by sin; there be two reasons why sin*
unquam male *are called bitter things.*
egi, diligenter
annotas. Merc.

First, Because they provoke God to anger, even to bitter anger, they imbitter the Spirit of God against us (*Hos. 12. 14.*) *Ephraim provoked him to anger most bitterly.*

Secondly, Because sin procures us evil and bitter things. Sin is bitter in the effects of it, as well as base in the nature of it.

Hence Observe,

How sweet soever sin is in the acting, it will be bitterness in the end.

There is a bitterness in the best of sin. One of these two things doth alwaies follow sin, Repentance or punishment. Repentance is the best we can expect when we have sinned; and they who do not repent shall find punishment whether they expect it or no. Now, there is a bitterness in Repentance; Repentance is no pleasant potion. Though the Saints have a holy delight in repentance, yet (take it in it self) repentance is no delightful work,

work, and therefore it is often expreſt by breaking the heart, and afflicting the ſoul. The repentance of the Jews is ſo deſcribed, (*Zac. 12. 10.*) *They ſhall look upon him whom they have pierced and they ſhall mourn for him as one that mourneth for his only ſon, and ſhall be in bitterness for him.* In bitterness and in repentance at the ſame time. So that let the beſt come of ſin which can come, that we repent and are humbled for it, and repent ſavingly, yet bitter ſorrows, bitter tears, and bitter mournings are the iſſues of it. I believe *Peter* did not ſin very ſweetly when he denied his maſter, but I am ſure after he had done it, *he wept bitterly*, (*Mat. 26. 75.*) But if the ſin be not repented of, then comes the bitterness of puniſhment. Poſſibly a ſin we repent of may receive bitter chaſtenings: God may correct us medicinally, for the ſins over which we have mourned penitently: but if the ſin be not repented of, then he puniſheth for the ſatisfaction of his own righteous juſtice, as well as for the correction of our unrighteouſneſs, and that's a bitter thing indeed. Thus ſin is a bitter thing as the effects of it are bitter: it is a bitter thing alſo as the root of it is bitter. So much that caution of *Moses* to *Iſrael* imports (*Deut. 29. 18.*) *Left there ſhould be among you a root that beareth gall and worm-wood.* In the ſoil of mans heart there is ſuch a root. Our natures bear nothing but gall and worm-wood, ſinful actions ſprout and ſhoot forth from our ſinful corruptions. Yet this place of *Moses* is to be underſtood, not ſo much of that general corruption which is in our hearts: for if ſo, then he needed not to ſay, *left there ſhould be among you a root which beareth gall and worm-wood.* For every man in the world, regenerate or unregenerate, hath ſuch a root in him: but he means it (as the text hath it) of ſome apoſtatizing or backſliding perſon that ſhould ſollicite others to ſin, ſaying, *Come, let us go and ſerve other gods*; he meant it of thoſe whoſe hearts were hardened and heightened in ſin, whoſe original corruption was drawn out not only to do wickedly themſelves, but to provoke their brethren unto wickedneſs, theſe he calleth emphatically *a root which beareth gall and worm-wood.* For look what a mans own corruption or original ſin is to him, the ſame is another corrupt and ſinful perſon to him, namely, an enticer unto ſin. So the Author to the *Hebrews* expounds *Moses* (*Heb. 12. 15.*) while he uſeth the ſame phraſe, or rather borrows it of *Moses*, *left any root of bitterness ſpringing up trouble you, and thereby*

thereby may be defiled; that is, lest some scandalous persons not only trouble the peace of the whole Church, but also vitiate the purity of some particular members of the Church, by the contagion of their evil example: now, though these Scriptures do rather call sinful persons, then the sin in a person, a *root of bitterness*, yet those persons are therefore called so, because of their sin, and their sin is a root which as it defiles others, so it destroys themselves. When the Apostle *Peter* saw he was deceived in *Simon Magus*, he saith, *Now perceive that thou art in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity. In the gall of bitterness* (Act. 8. 23.) that is, in a state of sin and impenitency, which will at last bring forth the bitterness of punishment. In that sense also the Prophet threatens, *Isa. 24. 9. They shall not drink wine with a song, strong drink shall be bitter to them that drink it*; that is, it shall be turned into bitterness; we have a common saying amongst us, *sweet meat hath sour sauce*; so here, strong drink, which goes down merrily, shall be turned into bitterness, they shall not drink it with a song. Voluptuous men mingle their drink with singing, but these sorrowful men should mingle their drink with weeping, this would make it bitter to those that drank it. *Solomon* describing the harlot (*Pro. 5. 4.*) with the contentments which she offers, concludes, *her end is bitter as worm-wood*, that is, the end which she brings others to. That's her end in which she causeth others to end, as well as that wherein she ends her self: her end both waies is the same, *bitter as worm-wood*. The Prophet *Jeremy* shuts up his admonition (*chap. 2. 19.*) with *Know therefore and see, that it is an evil thing and a bitter, that thou hast forsaken the Lord thy God, &c.* Sin is like that book (*Rev. 10. 9.*) *sweet in the mouth, but bitter in the belly*. Or, as *Abner* said to *Joab*, (*2 Sam. 2. 26.*) *Shall the sword devour for ever? knowest thou not that it will be bitterness in the latter end?* Yea, we may call every sin a bitter thing, not only in reference to the future effects of it, but in reference to the present taste of it. Sin is often bitter, not only in the belly, but in the mouth: it is bitterness not only in the end, but in the beginning, yea, the very sweetness which is in sin promotes the bitterness of it. For as, in nature, sweet meat liberally fed upon, beget choler, and beget bitterness in the stomach: so these sweet morsels of sin, upon which the soul feeds, cause bitter tastes and sour humours, disaffecting both soul and body, and troubling the whole man.

Non mirum est peccata quæ primum dulcia videntur amaritudines vocari, cum dulcia omnia in amarorem & bilem facili commutantur. Pined.

Secondly,

Secondly, *Bitter things* are the displeasure of God, take it abstractedly from the punishments which usually are sent out after *scribere amarit.* Thou writest *bitter things against me*; that is, thou art angry *ritudines est* with me. A man of a bitter spirit, and an angry man are the same. *cum ira & indignatione de-*
(Dan. 8. 7.) In the vision of the hee-goat and the ram, it is said, *corare extremi* that the hee goat came close unto the ram, and he was moved with *supplicij se-* cholera against him, so we translate: it is the same word in the *teniam.* Chaldee, which we have here in the Hebrew: he was moved *Amaritudo* with bitterness, that is, he was very angry. So (Hab. 1. 6.) *sape ponitur pro* the Chaldeans are described to be a bitter and an hoſty nation, *iracundia.* that is, an angry nation. Anger is bitter both to those who are angry, and to those with whom we are angry. Again (Pro. 17. 11.) *An evil man seeketh only rebellion*, it is this word, *he seeketh only bitterness*, which we translate *rebellion*, because they who indeed rebell are full of wrath, rage, and bitterness. The word is used in the same sence upon the surprize of Davids carriages by the Amalekites at Ziklag, 'tis said, *the ſoul of all the* people was grieved, or bitter (1 Sam. 30. 6.) that grief was properly anger, as we may collect by the effect of it, *for they spake* of ſtoning him, stoning is an high act of angry revenge. The learned Physicians tell us that bitter things are naturally very hot; *commotionem,* anger and displeasure are the heat of a mans spirit; *anger is the* boiling of the blood about the heart, as Philosophers teach. So that bitterness being caused by heat, we may well expreſs bitterness by anger, which hath so much from heat. Hence *curſing* (which is an act of anger) and *bitterneſs* are put together (Rom. 3. 14.) *as also bitterness with wrath.* Eph. 4. 31. Thus here, *Thou writest bitter things*, or *bitterneſs against me*, is, thou writest thy self angry and displeased with me. And so the words [*against me*] have an accent, a weight in them: as if he had said, *Thou seemest to vary the course of thy dealings towards me*, both in reference to former times, and in reference to other persons: *thou wast not wont to be thus bitter against me, and towards others thou art* sweet and gentle (Iſa. 54. 7.) *In a little wrath I hid my face from thee, for a moment; but with everlasting kindness I will have mercy on thee; that is, the experience which thy people have had of thee, and such have been my experiences: but now thou seemest to run another course, Thou writest bitter things against me.*

Taking bitterness for anger, I might Observe,

Y y

That

I hat God, sometimes appears very angry with those whom he actually loveth.

He seems to be all gall when he is nothing but honey, to burn with wrath when an everlasting flame of love is kindled in his breast, I have lately intitled on this point, therefore I forbear.

Again Observe,

The anger of God is very terrible, it is a bitter thing.

There is no dallying with divine displeasure.

Thirdly, Others restrain these *bitter things* to death. *Thou*

Vox amaritudinis accipitur pro mortis sententia lata.

Bold.

Analogia sumi videtur ex lethaliibus quibusdam ventres qui cum ignea & calidissima sunt, amarissima etiam sunt.

Fel terra. Pin.

wisest bitter things against me, that is, a decree of death. Death is a bitter thing: bitterness and death are joyned in Scripture, (2 King. 4. 40.) the Prophets said, *Death was in the pot*, when they had put wilde gourds, or bitter herbs into the pot: wilde gourds are very bitter, so bitter, that the Persians called them, *The gall of the earth*: death was in the pot when such bitter herbs were there. So *Isaiah* speaks (*Deut. 32. 32.*) *their grapes are grapes of gall, their clusters are bitter, their wine as the poison of Dragons*, that is, their grapes, their clusters, their wine, all their designs and actions are all deadly: deadly to themselves chiefly, but deadly also unto others. (*Prem. 31. 6.*) *Give wine unto those that be of bitter hearts*, some read it, *give wine unto those that be of bitter hearts*, so say the Original; And it is plain from the context, that he means, *of persons ready to dye*, or to be put to a violent death. The borders of death are bitter, much more death it self: yes, to some the borders or approaches of death are more bitter than death it self. When *Agag* was spared by *Saul*, he doubted not of quarter at the hands of *Samuel*, and therefore comes out delicately (*born in his gate and garbe*, 1 Sam. 15. 32.) and saith, *Swearly the bitterness of death is past*, that is, the fear of death is past: surely, if *Saul* a Souldier saved me alive in the heat of the battel, *Samuel* a Prophet will not kill me in cold blood. In this sense *Hezekiah* complains (*Isa. 38. 17.*) *For peace I had (for on my peace came) great bitterness*, that is, the fear of death, as the next words explain, while he saith, *but thou hast in love to my soul delivered it from the pit of corruption*. *Job* had the sentence of death in himself, and he thought God had written that sentence too. *Thou wisest bitter things against me.*

But I conceive [*bitter things*] are here intended in a larger sense, [enbg]

being put not only for the evil of death, but for all the evils of this life, for whatsoever renders the life of man bitter and grievous. For as bitterness among all tastes is most unpleasant to the palate; so also are afflictions both to the mind and outward man. The seventy agree in this sense so fully, that instead of bitter things they translate, *Thou wisest evil things against me.* It is frequent in Scripture to call any afflicting evil a bitter thing. (*Ruth* 1. 20.) *Naomi* changeth her name to *Marah*, when she was full of trouble: *Call me not Naomi, that is beautiful, but call me Marah, that is bitter; for the Almighty hath dealt very bitter with me, I went out full, and the Lord hath brought me home again empty.* She had lost all, and was in great affliction; therefore she takes a name suitable to her estate, *Call me Marah.* We read of the waters of *Marah*, that is, bitterness. (*Ex.* 16. 23.) All the waters of affliction may be called *Marah*, only the Lord shews his people a tree (as there he did *Moseri*) which being cast into them, makes them sweet. Afflictions in themselves are not joyous, but grievous, *Heb.* 12. 11. How grievous or bitter afflictions are to the flesh, hath been heretofore insisted on, therefore I pass it here. *Thou wisest bitter things against me.*

Amaritudo est quicquid potest vitam reddere molestem.
Inter sapores amaritudo est inimicissima nature & palato. Hinc amaritudo dicitur de re quacunque tristi, sc. amara anima, amarus fletus, amara lachryma.
Pined.
Katyge-las xal quoniam.
Sept.
Malum acerbum intelligi sup- plicia. Merc.

And makest me to possess the sins of my youth.

The Hebrew word which we translate to possess, signifies also to dispossess or disinherit, and by consequent to consume and destroy: so some translate it: whereas we say, *thou makest me to possess the iniquities of my youth,* they say, *Thou dispossessest me.* by the sins of my youth, thou makest me poor and naked, thou strippest me of all my comforts, by reason of the transgressions of my youth. And so, thou dispossessest me, is the same with our rendering, *Thou makest me to possess.*

Verbum
Ex id est qui contraria significat, denotat enim hereditate aliquem expellere, & per consequens consumere, perdere.

The sins of my youth,

What are those?

First, Some expound these words [*of my youth*] not of *Job's* youth personally taken, but of his youth relationally taken, that is, of his children. So, *Thou makest me to possess the sins of my youth,* is, thou makest me to possess the sins of my youth, or of my young ones who sinned against thee; I learn now to be punished for them, and to inherit my children's transgressions. So did

Quidem existimavit sua adolescentia peccata, et de filiis suis adolescentibus perpetrata suscepit. Pined.

Eli, God reckoned with him for his childrens sins: *Eli possedit the sins of his youth*, of his relational youth; of his sons whom he did not restrain (as he had power to do) when they were not only vicious but scandalous. Sin is an inheritance which ascends as well as descends: as many children possess or are punished for the sins of *their old age*, that is, of their fathers (they imitating their fathers sins) so many fathers possess, or are punished for the sins of *their youth*, that is, of *their children*; they having not sufficiently reprov'd their childrens sins: while parents neglect their duty to their children, they feel smart for their children; and the father of spirits laies those rods upon their backs, which their foolish indulgence would not suffer them to lay upon the backs of the children of their flesh. But I pass this interpretation as over-reaching the scope of this text, though it contain a general truth.

Secondly, Others interpret these words as a proof of *Jobs* eminent and exemplary piety and holiness, all the time of his elder and more confirmed years: as if God could find little or nothing to charge him with as sinful, after he came to be a man and was master of himself. 'Tis said by the reporter of *Cardinal Bellarmine* in his life and death, that when the Priest (according to the Romish custom) came to absolve him, he could not remember any particular sin to confess, till he went back in his thoughts as far as his youth. If it were so, I must say, that how great a scholar soever this *Cardinal* was in *book*, he was but a mean scholar in *his own heart and life*, in which the best Christians see sin enough to confess and bewail in the best times, yea, the better any one is, the more he sees his own sinfulness. The oldest and sincerest of Saints in this life, needs not go a day back, much less back to the beginning of his knowing daies, his youth, to find matter of confession, seeing he sins every day, yea, every hour. Yet thus they report of *Bellarmino* to advance his piety, that, if he had not confess'd the sins of his youth, he could not tell what to confess. In this sense, the present exposition makes *Job* speak to God, *Thou makest me to possess the sins of my youth*, as if all the sections and parts of his life had been unblamable. But this favours not the spirit of *Job*, who, as he was very confident of the sincerity of his heart, so he was well acquainted with the sinfulness of his nature, and saw himself not only a sinner, but much sin, all his life over.

Quidam ex hoc loco colligunt eximiam viri sanctissimi sanctitatem qui in aetate jam confirmata & magna nihil sibi conscivit. Sanct.

Thirdly

Thirdly, *To make it me to poſſeſs the ſins of my youth*, is, Thou makeſt me to poſſeſs or remember all my ſins: Job had the whole courſe and renour of his life in view. Old age and youth are the two extremes of mans knowing time upon the earth: We can hardly remember what we were, or what we did before the daies of our youth, though before that we are evil, and do evil. Man is born in ſin, and he ſins almoſt as ſoon as he is born, but thoſe ſins fall not under our own obſervation. *Auſtin* ſaid of himſelf, I know not the ſins I committed in my infancy, yet I know that then I ſinned; which he proves, becauſe he had obſerved anger and envie in ſucking children. Job goes not back to the ſins of his infancy and childhood, which others might remember, but he goes as far as himſelf could remember, even to the ſins of his youth: Theſe he poſſeſſed, or the thought of theſe poſſeſſed him. *That poſſeſſes a man which his mind runs much upon.* God is therefore ſaid to make him poſſeſs the ſins of his youth, becauſe the dealings of God with him cauſed him to recollect and read over all his ſins, eſpecially the ſins of youth.

Fourthly, *To poſſeſs the ſins of youth*, is, To feel ſorrow or pain *Pena eſt quaſi* for the ſins of our youth. We may be ſaid to poſſeſs the ſins of *culpa proguata* our youth two waies; firſt, when we feel the ſmart of them; ſe- *& filia, atq;* condly, when we are affected with the filthineſs of them in our *adco ipſe homo* riper years. Some old men poſſeſs the ſins of their youth another *grandævus &* way, namely, by delight: For, as moſt delight in the act of ſin, *ſenex ſuccedit* and not a few are delighted in the hopes of ſin, a ſin to be com- *sibi ipſi puero* mitted pleaſes them with a promiſe of future pleaſure, *& adoleſcenti.* *Pined.* *To mor-* row ſhall be as this day (ſaid thoſe Epicures, *Iſa. 5. 6.*) and much more abundant. They taſted the ſweer of ſin before they came at it. So, there are ſome that take delight in the ſins that are paſt: They that are old in ſin, can talk merrily of, and contem- plate ſweetly upon the ſins and vanities of their youth; and in this they do not only poſſeſs the ſins of their youth, but re-aſt the ſins of their youth: For, ſo often as a man remembers a ſin which he hath committed with content, he commits it again. Holy Job did not poſſeſs the ſins of his youth thus; he reflected upon them to mourn over them, and repent afreſh for them, not to make merry with them, he chewed them over again in his thoughts, not as ſweet morſels, but as gall and wormwood. *That he was* made to poſſeſs the ſins of his youth.

Fifthly, *The ſins of youth are poſſeſſed*, When the guilt of them

lies in our faces, and our fears that they are not pardoned, return upon our spirits: In this sense also (*Psalm 139*) God made *Jonah* feel the sins of his youth. He was so much (or more) distressed with inward terror, as with outward trouble: and when God hid his face from him, he saw his sins with open eyes.

Hence observe,

First, *Youth is easily overtaken with sin.*

Young men are least able to foresee the issues, to resist the temptations, or keep out of the ways of sin. The Prophet describes the childhood of Christ, our *Emmanuel*, under the notion of childhood in general, which knows not how to refuse the evil and chuse the good (*Isa. 7. 15*.) *Paul* saith of himself (*1 Cor. 13. 11*.) *When I was a childe, I spake as a child, I understood as a childe, I thought as a childe*: all in him, or done by him, was childish, when he was a childe. 'Tis but a little better (ordinarily) and sometimes it is much worse in the next step of man's life, which is *youth*. He that is a youth, thinks as a youth, speaks as a youth, acts as a youth: all in him and done by him is youthful, that is, imperfect and immature, subject to miscarriages and mistakes. *David* puts, and answers the question (*Psal. 119. 91*) *Where withall shall a young man cleanse his way?* Young men are apt to go foul waies, or to defile their waies, and therefore need instruction how to cleanse them. And *David* praises in special, that God would pardon the errors which he found in that paragraph of his life, *Psal. 119. 7. Remember not the sins of my youth.* And besides, the obnoxiousness of youth to sin in general, *Jonah* hath its proper sins. The Apostle writing to *Timothy*, an holy man, yet a young man, exhorts him (*2 Tim. 2. 22*.) *Fly youthful lusts*, look to that, there are lusts which hang upon youth, and dog that season of life more than any other, there are certain sins to which we are peculiarly endangered in each division of our lives: As every calling, every place, every relation hath its special sins and temptations, so hath every age of life. Old men are passionate and covetous, men of middle age are revengeful and malicious, young men are precipitate and voluptuous. The Hebrews call a young man *Nagman*, which springs from a root, signifying to shake off, or to be tossed to and fro, implying that such are unconstant to their own resolutions, and apt to shake off the gravest counsels. Hence the Apostle cautions not only *Timothy* but *Titus*, *Let no man despise thy youth*: as if he had said.

Furiosus juvenibus animi habitus. Plat. lib. 2. de Leg.

said.

said, thy youth lies open to contempt, because it lies so open to sin: keep to the rule, and thou wilt keep up thy reputation. Be thou watchful over thy self, lest thou be despised: For, I conceive, the charge is not so much given unto others (though that be a good sense) as unto *Timothy* himself. *Paul* puts it close upon him, *Let no man despise thy youth*, do thou so behave thyself, that none may have so much as a colour or pretence to despise thee. How he might do so, his next advice directs: *Be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in faith, in purity*, (1 Tim. 4. 12.) Make it appear that thy wisdom and understanding have outstript thy years; make it appear that all gravity doth not wait upon the hoary head: make it appear that some, even in the bud and blossome of nature, are ripe in grace, and mature in holiness; write after this copy, and all will either imitate thee, or not contempt thee: Thus aged *Paul* lessons and cautions his young scholar *Timothy*, as knowing the disadvantages of youth, and the temptations it subjects us to.

Secondly, Observe,

That sins of youth may prove the sufferings of old age.

As young men who are very active and venturous receive bodily bruises and blows in the heat of youth, which they feel and groan under when they are old: so likewise the sins which young men venture upon and make light of, may press their souls, and lie heavy upon their spirits in old age. *Job* speaks of some wicked old men (chap. 20. 11.) whose bones are full of the sins of their youth, which shall lie down with them in the dust. The sins of some old men are young: while their bodies grow weak, their lusts grow strong: such shall feel more smart of them in old age, than ever they found pleasure or delight in them in youth. Their bones shall be full of them, though their bellies are never full of them. It is a sad meeting when young sins and old bones meet together: And it is possible that even they who have truly repented of the sins of youth, may yet feel the grief of them in old age: For though such shall not be punished for the sins of youth, yet they are often chastened for them; and though God will not remember their sins against them, yet he may give them such mindings of them as will make their hearts to ache, and themselves cry out, What fruit have we of those youthful vanities whereof we are now ashamed, and wherewith we are now pained? *Of four youths he is given as first-fruits unto God; he usually gives us (yet in mercy*

mercy to his) bitter after-fruits : Give God the possession, yea, the dominion of thy youth, lest thou say (as Job) he makes me possess the sins of my youth.

Seek first the Kingdom of God, seek it first in intention, in the first place, and with the best of thy desires and endeavours : Seek it also first in time, let him have the flower of thy youthful services, lest thou taste the fruit of youthful sins.

Thirdly, Observe,

That a godly man looks often upon present sufferings as the chastenings of his former sins.

God did not afflict Job for his former sins, for he told Satan (Chap. 2.) *Thou movest me against him without cause*, that is, without any such cause as thou hast pretended and suggested, I find no affected unrighteousness in him: yet Job saith to God, *Thou makest me to possess the sins of my youth.* He look'd back upon his life, and saw such failings and corruptions as might call for the rod of this sharp and severe correction. Whatsoever Gods aim is in afflicting, it well becomes the best of Saints to have an eye upon their sins when God hath them under his afflictions. They who are freest from the fear of Gods revenging hand for sin, are readiest to remember their sin when they feel his correcting hand.

Fourthly, Observe,

Sins formerly repented of, and pardoned, may be presented to the soul as unpardoned.

Some conceive Job under that temptation, while he was under this affliction. The tenour of the covenant of grace is, *I will forgive their iniquities, and remember their sins no more: and when their sins come to be searched for, they shall not be found, because I have pardoned them.* God never revoked any of his gracious pardons, nor doth he ever re-charge pardoned sins: yet a godly man may remember his old sins with new fears that they are not pardoned. As it is one of Satans devices to fill them with assurance of pardon who are under guilt, so to fill those with doubtings that they are not pardoned who are acquitted from guilt: while it is an easie thing with a soul to sin, it is also very easy for that soul to believe the pardon of sin: But when once Christ helps us to dispossess our souls of the power of sin, how doth Satan labour to possess our souls with the guilt of it: yea, God himself may, for a time, or for our trial, make us possess the

the guilt of it; and leave us to the questionings of passed pardon. In such a case the sins which have been pardoned are pardoned again, not that the first pardon is recalled, but cleared, and faith strengthened that we are pardoned. For though there are no degrees in pardoning grace it self (in sanctifying grace there are, that doth or should grow every day in us, and we encrease in it with the encrease of God) yet pardoning grace may have an encrease as to the person pardoned. All the sins of a believers youth are pardoned, yet he often wants evidence of his pardon: The grace of God knows no decay, but there are decays in our spirits and upon our faith about it; and those sins whose commanding strength is broken, may stand up in much condemning strength. *I thou makest me to possess the sins of my youth.*

Lastly, Observe,

That in times of affliction believers are apt to have misgiving thoughts about the pardon of sin.

Affliction carries with it a renovation of guilt, though it be no argument of guilt; As punishment is the daughter of guilt, so affliction is somewhat akin to punishment. Now, because he who is but afflicted often thinks himself punished, and he that is punished ought to acknowledge himself guilty, hence it comes to pass that he who is but afflicted thinks himself under guilt, he is full of fears that his sins stand still upon his own score, and that God is reckoning with him upon that account. When the womans son was dead, she said to the Prophet, *Art thou come unto me to call my sins to remembrance, and to slay my son?* (1 King. 17. 18.) Her sorrows brought her sins to remembrance, and then she feared that God contended with her for her sins. God maketh us to possess the sins of our youth, when in old age (as it follows) *he puts our feet in the stocks.*

Verse 27. *For thou puttest my feet also in the stocks, and lookest narrowly into all my paths, and settest a print upon the heels of my feet.*

I shall add only a word of this and of the next verse, because both are but an aggravation of *Jobs* sufferings, about which he hath spoken so much before.

For thou puttest my feet.

As if he had said, *Thou proceedest with all severity against me as against a grand malefactor, thou layest me fast by the heels.* It is usual to put offenders into prison or into the stocks. Some translate this word by *shackles*, some by *stocks*, some by *prison*; Job amplifies his misery under all these notions. His afflictions were to him as a prison, as stocks, as shackles. The Church expresseth her sufferings in this metaphorical language. (*Lam. 3. 5, 6, 7.*) *He hath builded against me, and compassed me with gall and travel; he hath set me in dark places, as they that be dead of old; he hath hedged me about that I cannot get out, he hath made my chain heavy.* Jerusalem was as a prisoner loaded with irons, bound in chains, and enclosed round about with thick and mighty walls. Such was Job's condition. *Thou puttest my feet in the stocks,*

And lookest narrowly into all my paths.

Amplificatio
est arctissima
custodia, Pin.
Singulis his
malis circum-
aludens me tan-
quam armatis
custodiis. Jun.

This good man was not only a prisoner, but a close prisoner; His paths were looked narrowly unto, his troubles like armed keepers went with him whithersoever he went: if at any time he was let out of the stocks, a watch was set upon him lest he should escape; or rather it was with him as with those prisoners who are narrowly watcht while they are in closest prisons. When Peter was in prison, the keepers watched at the door, and more then that, *he slept between two souldiers, bound with two chains*, (Act. 12. 6.) Thus narrowly was Peter looked unto; and thus in allusion was Job looked unto: *Am I a sea, or a Whale, that thou settest a watch over me?* was Job's question, in the 7th chapt. His assertion here, *Thou lookest narrowly into all my paths*, seems to carry the same intendment; thither I refer the Reader for the further clearing of this.

Yet others give the meaning thus, *Thou observest all my afflictions*, and then *paths* are taken metaphorically; so the seventy translate, *Thou takest notice of all my works*: Which reading bears a proportion to the proceedings of a Magistrate, who having attached an offender, and laid him fast, looks and enquires into his life, and examines his particular offence, that so a charge or an inditement may be drawn up and brought in against him at his tryal. The next clause runs in the same strain.

And

And settest a print upon the heels of my feet.

Mr. Broughton translates from the letter of the Original, *And thou leavest thy prints upon the roots of my feet.* The roots of the feet are, say some, the soles, say others, the steps of the feet. And whereas we translate *the heels*, which is the hinder part of the foot, the word is translated also by the forepart of the foot, which is divided into toes, as the root of a tree divides it self. But though there be some variety about the particular signification of the word, yet the general sense is, That Job prosecutes the allegory of a prisoner.

Radices pedum sunt vel vestigia vel plantæ. Coc. Radices pedum vocat ipsos primos vel extremos pedes qui in digitos quasi radices partes dividuntur. Jun. Simplicissimum puto, signum tibi facis, i. e.

First thus, *Thou settest a print upon the heels of my feet*, that is, *Thou followest me as it were at the heels*; *Thou dost not only watch my paths, but even tellest my steps.* If I do but set down my feet, thou printest upon the very same place; and so it falls in with the sense of the former clause.

annotas omnia vestigia mea, Meis. Ita me quacunque incedam sollicite observas ut ubicunque pedem posui in quoque vestigium figas. Bez. Vel ut sensus scilicet, scilicet constringi & premi ut vices appareat. Lav. Vestigia in extremitatibus pedis articulos pertingunt, ut quum pes sonitis totus uritur gravitate com-

Or Secondly, He, in these words, complaineth of his foreness by reason of this imprisonment, *Thou settest a print upon the heels of my feet*; the shackles and the chains which are upon me leave their marks behind them in my flesh, my feet, the very soles and toes of my feet swell with my heavy fetters. *Jobs condition was like that of the afflicted Jews in the Prophet (Isa. 1. 5.) The whole head was sick, and the whole heart was faint, from the sole of the foot even unto the head, there was no soundness in him, but wounds and bruises.* There was a wound in the very soles of his feet, that is, he was all over wounded, or afflicted quite through. As Paul said, *I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus*, so might Job; Paul had marks or prints of his sufferings for God, Job of his sufferings under the hand of God.

I will not draw out any particular observations from these words, seeing they all tend (which hath been more than once observed already) to shew

First, That God casts his outward dispensations towards his choicest servants into forms of greatest rigour and severity.

Secondly, That great afflictions often draw out great complaints from the choicest servants of God.

Thirdly, That the most patient man may sometimes let fall words of impatience under the hand of God.

Where faith is highest it is not always at the same height; and

where patience hath a perfect work; some of his works may be full of imperfection. But I pass these, and shall only note two things.

First, The several stairs or steps by which Job's spirit ascended to the highest sense of his afflictions. Here is a sevenfold gradation, in this and the precedent verses. 1. God hid his face. 2. He counted him as his enemy. 3. He broke him like a leaf. 4. He writ bitter things against him. 5. He made him possess the sins of his youth. 6. He puts him into prison. 7. He watched him lest he should escape, and followed him step by step. What could be added to these sorrows? might not Job say with the Church in the Lamentations, *Was there ever sorrow like unto my sorrow? They that are greatest in holiness, may be greatest in sufferings.*

Secondly, Note,

Job still keeps his eye and heart upon God in all his afflictions.

THOU hidest thy face. *THOU* countest me thine enemy! *THOU* pursuest me. *THOU* writest bitter things against me. *THOU* makest me possess the sins of my youth. *THOU* puttest me in the stocks. *THOU* settest a print upon the heels of my feet. He sees God in all, and fears not to make him the Author of all these evils: *We honour God as much in acknowledging him to be the fountain of all the evils we suffer, as of the good things we enjoy.*

The 28th verse is joyned by some to the next chapter, as if that whole chapter were but an explication of this verse, or at least this verse the preface to that whole chapter.

Verse 28. *And he as a rotten thing consumeth; as a garment that is moth-eaten.*

And he.

Who is that? He changeth the person from the first to the third, he doth not say, *I*, but *He*, though he meaneth himself: such speaking is frequent in Scripture, and hath been noted before in this book.

He as a rotten thing, &c.

As if he had said, I am not able to continue under these afflictions,

ations; or bear these pressures any longer, I faint, I fail, I decay, I die. He asked the question what he was (chap. 6. 12.) *Is my strength the strength of stones? or is my flesh brass?* Here he tells us what he and his strength, what he and his flesh are, *even as a rotten thing, as a garment that is moth-eaten.*

We have here a double similitude, both implying his insufficiency to stand in the hands of God: 1. Of a rotten thing. 2. Of a garment eaten with moths. I consume, and how? as a rotten thing. The Hebrew is concrete, I consume as *rottenness*; rottenness it self is consuming, and rottenness consumeth any thing it toucheth. Time will consume that which is sound, but that which is already rotten, how quickly doth it consume? how can that hold out against decay which is a decay? *I consume as a rotting thing.*

And as a garment that is moth-eaten.

David compares man under affliction to a moth, as here Job to a moth-eaten garment; Psal. 39. 11. *When thou with rebukes dost chasten man for iniquity, thou makest his beauty to consume away like a moth.* Moths have so little substance in them, that they have scarce any subsistence. The least touch crusheth and moulders them into nothing: A moth is as weak as weakness it self, yet it eats out the strength of the strongest garment. A moth-eaten garment is scarce a garment: The beauty of it is defaced, and the usefulness of it is departed. Mans best garments of honor and riches, are little better then a moth-eaten garment. (Jamu. 5. 1. 2.) *Go ye now ye rich men, weep and howl for the miseries that shall come upon you, your riches are corrupted, and your garments are moth-eaten.* Where the Apostle is conceived to inveigle rich men (from which they think themselves at greatest distance) to mourn over their miseries. First, because they treasure up riches of which they make no use, but let them corrupt; and because they provide wardrobs of apparel which they wear not, but the moths eat them up. Secondly, because they lay out their strength and time in gathering a perishing portion, riches which are corruptible, and garments which are meat for moths. As if he had said, how vain are you who labour for that which is more then corruptible? your riches are actually corrupted, and your garments, how careful soever you are to perfume and preserve them are more then subject to moths, the moth actually eats them.

them. Now (I say) if mans best garments are little better then a moth-eaten garment, what is a moth-eaten garment? and then what is that man (such a one Job counteth himself) *who consumeth as a garment that is moth-eaten?* Surely the spirit of this holy man could not go lower for a comparison then the effects of moths and rottenness.

By which self-abasement he seems to argue with God for compassion and sparing mercies: as if he had said, *Could I bear these sorrows any longer, I would not so earnestly beg an end of them: but alas! if they do not end speedily, I must: My strength is gone, and I am but rottenness: Thou who tearest me as a Lion by open and violent afflictions, dost also eat me, as a moth, by secret and silent consumptions.*

I might here also draw out divers Observations about the frailty of man. As first, *That man is but weakness and rottenness.* Secondly, *That man cannot hold out against the hand of God.* Thirdly, *That even some of Gods chastenings are destroyings and consumings to all the strength and lustre of the outward.* Fourthly, *That a believer in affliction is apt to mis-judge the issues of his own condition.* But because these points have occurred upon other texts of like sence with this, therefore I only hint them, and shall shut up this whole Chapter, with this brief admonition from the conclusion of it. How should we labour to please God in walking uprightly with him, before whom we cannot stand when he is angry with us? how should we labour to live in his favour, by whose displeasure we are suddenly consumed? And if the chastenings of God consume those whom he loves, how will his judgments consume those whom he hates? *When thou Lord with rebukes dost chasten man for iniquity, thou makest his beauty to consume,* Psal. 39. 11. How then will his beauty consume when God with severest revenges chastens man for iniquity? *Our God is a consuming fire,* he can consume us as a rotten thing, and as a garment that is moth-eaten, therefore *let us (ask and) have grace that we may serve him acceptably with reverence and godly fear.*



Job Chap. 14. Verse 1, 2.

Man that is born of a woman, is of few days, and full of trouble.

He cometh forth as a flower and is cut down: he fleeth also as a shadow and continueth not.

IN the last verse of the former chapter (which some connect with this) Job shewed how poor and pitiful, how weak and miserable a thing man is under the afflicting hand of God; and he did it under the shadow of a twofold similitude. First, *Of a rotten thing.* Secondly, *Of a garment which is moth-eaten.*

He prosecutes the same argument, in the first and second verses of this chapter. From all drawing down this expository conclusion, vers. 3. *And dost thou open thine eyes upon such an one? &c.*

Verse 1. *Man that is born of a woman, is of few days, and full of trouble.*

Job doth not say, *I that am born of a woman, am of few days;* but, *Man that is born, &c.* He speaks in the third person, rather than in the first, for two reasons, as I conceive.

First, To shew that those miseries which were fallen upon him might fall upon others; *No temptation had taken hold of him, but such as was common to man.*

Secondly, He speaks thus, the more to abase himself; The third person put for the first implies contempt. He thinks himself scarce worth the naming, who doth not speak of himself in his own name. *Man that is born of a woman, &c.*

Man is here described two ways, first, in his original or procreating cause, *Woman.* Secondly, in his state or condition, and that from a double adjunct: first, of time, *He is of few days;* secondly, of affliction, *Full of troubles:* Both further illustrated

Teria persona pro prima usurpacio contemptum denotat.
Bold.

by

by two similitudes, first, of a flower, secondly, of a shadow : Of all which this is the sum or the result, *He doubts much not, vers. 2.*

Man that is born of a Woman.

That is, Every man, or (as we say) every mothers child. Mr. Broughton adds an Epithere borrowed from the signification of the Hebrew word *Adam*, *Earthly man born of a Woman*. The first woman was (in a sence) born of a man ; but since all men are born of a woman : And as the first man received his proper name *Adam* (which is now become an Appellative, or common to all men) from the matter out of which he was formed, earth, or red earth, *Gen. 2.7.* So the first woman received her proper name (which is now become an Appellative, or common to all women) from the matter out of which she was formed, the flesh and bone of man, *Gen. 2.23.* And *Adam* said, *This is now bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh, she shall be called woman, because she was taken out of man.* And as in our language the woman hath but a syllable more in her name then the man, so also in the Hebrew, there it is, *Ish, Ishah*, with us, *Man, Woman*. The Rabbins have an Observation, That in the word *Ish* and *Ishah*, the letters of the name of God, *Jah*, are contained, which is (say they) an argument or token of the gracious presence of God with husband and wife, while they walk in that relation according to the Will of God ; but if they depart from that, God departs from them, and taking the letters of his own Name from their names, there remains nothing but *fire* (so the words denuded of Gods Name signifie) between them both.

But to the Text; Man is here spoken of as born of a woman, rather then as begotten by man, and that (possibly) for these three Reasons.

First, Because the formation and production of man is from the woman, in her the body of man is framed by the mighty power of God, and all the pieces of it put together ; and in her man receives his life and quickening. Hence it was that *Adam* who at first called his wife *woman*, because she was taken out of man, calls her afterwards *Eve*, because she was the mother of all living, (*Gen. 3.20.*) And upon this ground some Nations have made a Law, that all descents should be reckoned by the mother, because

Mulier dicitur virago quia de viro sumpta.

In **WIN**
& **NUN**
Coniunctur no-
men Dei **NI**
Quod est sym-
bolum gratiose
Dei presentie
si maritus &
uxor iuxta Dei
precepta vi-
vant, si ab eis
recedant, &
Deum recedere
ab ipsis, ut u-
triusque nomen
excluso **NI**
igneat **WIN**
ignis. Buxtorf.

Hence Observe,

The Original or birth of man speaks the frailty of man.
 As that which is impure cannot send out that which is clean, so neither can that which is weak produce that which is strong. As man breeds that in him which will consume him, so he is bred of that which he must consume. If it be asked how a garment fets when it is not worn, or how Timber wastes when it is not used: we answer, the garment breeds a moth which fets it, and the Timber a worm which eats it out. If it be also asked, how man decays when no outward violence appears against him, we may answer, he breeds his own decay: himself gives life to a worm in his root which smites his flourishing power to death: thus man breeds his own consumption. But besides this, he is bred of that which doth consume. *Man is born of a woman.* And as God decreed, for the punishment of her sin, *that the woman should bring forth in sorrow* (Gen. 3. 16.) so the woman brings forth a sorrowful man. Can we expect any thing but sorrowful from sorrowful? from frail but frail? or from her who is of few days and full of trouble, any thing but him who is such himself? So it follows in *Job's* description of man, where having given us the cause, he proceeds to the effect. *Man is born of a woman.* Woman is the procreating cause of man, and from her man derives a double birth. *He is born of a woman, and is full of troubles.*

Woman is full of troubles. 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of an hand. The breadth of the hand is taken two waies, 1. In the largest extent, for a span or the whole space between the top of the thumb and the little finger stretched out. 2. In the lesser extent, for the breadth only of four fingers, which is the measure (as interpreters conceive) which David takes of the daies of man.

Secondly, The fewness or shortness of mans daies, may be considered comparatively, and that two waies. First, As man may be compared with man. Secondly, As man is compared with God.

We may collect the fewness of mans daies, now by comparing him with man under a twofold consideration. First, Of what number the daies of man once were. Secondly, of what number they shall be.

First, The daies of man are few now compared, first, with what his daies were before the flood, then many men lived, six, seven, eight, nine hundred, and some almost a thousand years, as Moses hath reported the genealogy, age, and death of the Patriarchs, from Adam unto Noah (Gen. 5.) Now, if any man attain four-score or a hundred years, he is wondrous old, and if any reach one hundred and forty or fifty (as lately one of our country men did) he is such a rarity, that he draws more eyes to behold his wrinkled withered face, then any can with their most youthful beauty. I read of one who had been an Esquire for the body to Charles the great Emperour of Germany, who is called in History John of Time; because he lived three hundred sixty and one years. Yet three hundred sixty one, is but a few to eight or nine hundred years; and besides the life of that age is not to be cast up by what years one man lived, but by what was the ordinary number of mans years in that age.

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But as mans daies are few, compared with what he lived before the flood; so they are fewer compared secondly, with the daies which man might have lived if he had not fallen. The state of innocency had in it a kind of immortality; it was not impossible for Adam to die before he fell, but it was possible for him not to die: this is now changed into a certainty, that we shall die, according to that law of heaven (Heb. 9. 27.) It is appointed unto all men once to die. Now the daies of man are truly called few or too short; because it is determined they shall end, and that shortly: and though the determed end of these daies is

uncertain to us, yet their end is certainly determined. Now if the daies of man are few, compared with what they may be, or might have been upon the Earth, how few are they in comparison of what they shall be when he shall be raised out of the Earth? Then the daies of mans life, whether in heaven or hell, in happiness or in misery, shall be as many as the daies, or rather as long as the day of eternity.

Again, As the daies of Man are few, compared with what he once had and shall have, so they are fewest of all, compared with the daies of God, so few, that as his daies cannot be counted, because they are so many, so ours can hardly be counted, because they are so few. *David* who found out a dimension (a hand-breadth) for the daies of man, considered absolutely or in themselves, could find out no dimension little enough for the daies of man, compared with God (*Psal. 39. 5.*) *Mine age* (and his Age may be the measure of every mans Age, *Mine age* (saith he) *is as nothing before him.* All time is as nothing compared with eternity, what a nothing then is the Age of one man to eternity, which is scarce any thing to all time? Some things created and finite are so great above others, that they are nothing to them; What is the Ass to the Elephant, or the Shrimp to the Whale? What is the whole body of the earth, to the Body of the Heavens? Naturalists say 'tis but a Point. Now if one creature be so far exceeded by another creature, that it is scarce discernable, how indiscernable are all creatures to the Creator, finite to Infinite? As one part of the earth is but a Point to the whole, and the whole earth but a Point to the Heavens, so one part of time is but a moment to all time, and all time is but a moment to eternity, especially to the eternity of God: which is not only as some creatures (by his dispensation) shall have, an *Eternity forwards*, but also as no Creature is in a capability, or possibility to have, an *Eternity backwards*; and yet in strict sense, there is neither *forwards* nor *backwards*, neither past nor to come in Gods eternity: His being consists in one eternal Now, or *I am*, and hath nothing to do with, *I was*, or *I shall be*; and therefore the Age of man is nothing before him; for mans Age though it be as nothing undivided, is yet divided, into *past*, *present*, and *to come*. Three nothings, which being added together amount in the great summe to this nothing of the age and daies of man (as *David* speaks) before God.

Hence

Hence Observe,

Sin is the shortner of mans daies.

Job leads us to this Observation, while he saith, *Man that is born of a woman is of few daies.* Man born of a woman is sinful man. This truth is so general, that it never received an exception in any one man born, after the ordinary way of a Woman. Christ was born of a Woman, but he was conceived miraculously by the holy Ghost. Man might have been born of a Woman, and yet have been of many daies, if he had not been born in sin. 'Tis the birth of sin in man which is the seed of death: And as sin makes the daies of all men few in Nature, so the sins of some men makes theirs fewer then the daies of Nature. For as though the daies of a good man at the most are but few, yet because of some special goodness they are often prolonged: so, though the daies of a wicked man at the most are but few, yet, because of some special wickedness they are often shortened. *Solomon* gives us both parts of this Assertion in one verse. (*Prov. 10. 27.*) *The fear of the Lord prolongeth (or addeth to) daies, but the years of the wicked shall be shortened.* And as *Solomon* tells us positively, they shall be shortened, so *David* tells us negatively, how much they shall be shortened (*Psal. 55. 23.*) *Bloudy and deceitful men shall not live out half their daies:* Possibly they shall not live out a quarter of their daies, but he is peremptory that they shall not live out half their daies. Thus, as every man because he is a sinner shall live but a few daies, so some shall not live half those few daies, because they are notorious sinners. All men are of few daies, some men are of fewer then a few. The sin of nature shortens all mens lives into a fewer daies, and sins of practice shortens some mens lives into fewer then a few.

From *Job's* solemn doctrine of mans short life or few daies, we may draw out many lessons of very serious Admonition.

First, Seeing our daies are few, let us live all our daies: some loose many our of a few, and live not one of their few daies. 'Tis possible to have a being (according to the account of man) many daies, and to have lived none of them, or not to have lived at all. *We live no more of our time then we spend well.* A Heathen said, *he lived no day without a line,* that is, he did somewhat remarkable every day. What a shame it is that a Christian should live a day without a line, doe nothing in it worth the doing!

Sm. = 1832

AAAA;

Secondly,

Secondly, Be perswaded that your daies are few. It is easie to say our daies are few, but it is hard to believe it: Every age hopes to see the next age. The child hopes to be a Youth, and the Youth to be a Man, the man hopes to be an old man, and he that is an old man hath hopes to be very old, he that is very old, hopes to live more then a few daies yet, or that yet he shall not die these many daies. And because every age hath hopes to live that which is to come, it doth not live that which is present. We should do more work, but that we hope for more daies.

Ab hoc momento pendet eternitas.

Thirdly, Seeing the time of this life is short and hastens out of our hands, let us make haste to lay hold upon eternal life. Our daies here are few, such as a child may count; but daies innumerable, such as no man can count or depend upon them. All our daies are but few, and every man living hath lived a few daies already, possibly thy few daies past are all that thou shalt passe. Say not of Repentance, I will repent to morrow, Say not to Christ when he is tendered thee to day, come again to morrow. *Boast not thy self of to morrow* (saith Solomon, Prov. 27.1.) *for thou knowest not what a day* (even the day thou now hast) *may bring forth.* Possible this day may bring forth thy death (for the daies of man are few) and then how shall to morrow bring forth thy Repentance, or make thee another offer of a *This-daies refused Christ*; Wilt thou boast of the births of to morrow, when as thou knowest not whether a morrow shall be brought forth to thee; *Man* (whosoever thou art) *was not thou born of a woman?* if so, thy daies are few, thy busineses are many, and there is one thing necessary. We say of some men, that they do much in a little time: and truly how much soever any man hath to do, he hath but a little time to do it in. Few daies sure are but a little time, and all the time we have is but a few daies. Besides, These few daies are all the working-daies that ever we shall have: Let this be a spur to diligence and to duty? Hear and obey the counsel of the Preacher (Ecc. 9.10.) *Whatsoever thy hand findeth to doe, doe it with thy might, for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the grave whither thou goest.* In Heaven there is nothing but rest, and in Hell though there be no rest, yet there is no labour. In Hell there is nothing but wages, and in Heaven, there is nothing but reward, our whole work lies in the few daies which are on this side both,

Fourthly,

Fourthly, See in this truth, what false conclusions worldly men make unto themselves, when with him in the 12th of Luke. ver. 19, 20, they say to their Souls, *Souls, ye have goods laid up for many years, take your ease, eat, drink, and be merry.* How vainly doe men reckon upon many years yet to come, when as their whole time Past, present, and to come can make up but a few daies! The Apostle James rebukes those upon this ground, who forelaid their business but *one year*, how much more are they rebukeable who forelay their pleasures for many years? chap. 4. 13, 14. *Go to now, ye that say to day, or to morrow we will go into such a City, and continue there a year, and buy, and sell, and get gain, whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow: for what is your life? It is not even a vapour that appeareth for a little time, (that is at most but a few daies,) and then vanisheth away?* So Paul Placeth down a worldly Spirit, (1 Cor. 7. 29, 30. *I say brethren, the time is short, it remaineth, that they who have wives be as if they had none, and they that weep, as though they wept not, and they that joyce, as though they joyced not; and they that buy as though they possessed not, and they that use this world, as not abusing it.*) We should shorten our joys and our sorrows, we should take up, or draw in our affections about worldly things, because our time in this world is short, and our daies are continually drawing off from the World.

Fifthly, This should check our envy at the prosperity of wicked men. Their day (of account) is coming, and their daies (of receipt) are going (Psal. 73. 18, 19.) *how are they brought to desolation in a moment, and as a dream when one awaketh, so O Lord, when thou awakest, thou shalt despise their image.*

Sixthly, Let the righteous be patient in afflictions, all their daies are but few, and therefore their daies of Sorrow cannot be many. *Yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry.*

Lastly, Trust not in man, yea, cease from man whose breath is in his nostrils, and whose daies (because they are few) must shortly cease. Place not the hopes of your life in him, who cannot (with warrant) hope for a long life, much less assure you of any comfort of your life: seeing as his own life is empty of daies, so it is as it follows in this Text.

Full of trouble.

Few daies and many troubles make up the character of man. We use to say, *short and sweet*; but here it is, *short and sower*, *Job*, *short and bitter*. As some speak much in a little, much matter in a little discourse, many matters in a few words. And as some do much with a little, much good with a little talent. So all men suffer much in a little, much trouble in a little time, many sorrows in a few daies.

Full of trouble.

Y³W repletus
satur, ad
ventriculum
& appeten-
tiam refer-
tur.

Y³W est con-
turbari, in-
quietari ali-
quo vehe-
menti doloris
effectu.

Satur Tre-
more Regia.
Plenus ira
eundia, Pag.

The word which we translate *Full*, alludes to the filling of the stomach, and the satisfying of the appetite with meat. *Trouble is hard fare, but there is plenty of it.* Man usually bath his fill, and never knows the want of trouble. Ever since man brought forth sin, the earth brought forth trouble. Sin is the seed of trouble, and trouble is all the Harvest we reap by sin.

The word which we render, *trouble*, contains in it more sorts of trouble then one. It notes not only all kind of outward trouble, but inward trouble, vexing trouble, such as distords and unquiets the whole man. Some render it by trembling, for the word is used, *Hab. 3. 16. My belly trembled* (or *my bowels were moved*) *rottiness entered into my bones.* Holy men are full of trembling at the holiness of God, and sinful men have reason to be full of trembling at their own sinfulness. The body trembles when the visions of impudent evil pass before, or are represented to the mind. Others render it by anger, wrathfulness, rage. *Man is full of anger*; and that in a two fold construction, first, passively, he feels the anger both of God and man, the sad effects of mans rage, and of Gods displeasure. Secondly, actively, man is full of his own anger, full of Anger. 1. Against his fellow-brethren. 2. Against God. 3. At the dispensations of God, when God sends him trouble he is angry, when God sends others Prosperity, if it like not him, he is angry. Anger makes the Prosperity of others our trouble, and our own troubles would be little trouble to us if we were not angry with our troubles. Troubles and Anger are well expressed by the same word, seeing most of our troubles proceed from the Anger of God, and are all encreased by our own anger.

For the clearing of *Jobs* Proposition or Observation, That man

man is full of troubles. I shall present the Reader with a particular of the troubles of man, divided into inward and outward.

Inward troubles proceed from within the soul. First, From the terrors wherewith God first terrified the spirits of his own people. *Job* was full of these troubles as we have opened before, and so was *Heman*. *Psal.* 88. 15. Secondly, There are Terrors wherewith God vexeth the spirits of wicked men, *Chin*, *Saul*, and *Judas* were full of these troubles; and the Prophet pronounceth of wicked men in general; that they are like the troubled Sea when it cannot rest. *Isa.* 57. 20.

Secondly, Inward troubles arise from the temptations of Satan, we hear many poor souls complaining of these. As that wicked spirit goes about seeking rest and finding none, so he would not suffer any man to rest. Satan is a troubled spirit, and he is a troubling spirit.

Thirdly, Inward troubles arise from the lusts and corruptions of our own hearts. *Paul* who triumphed and rejoiced over all outward troubles, cries out, *O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?* *Rome.* 7. 24. Who is there that hath any spiritual life, who grows not under the body of this death? One bemoans and weeps over unbelief, another over pride, a third over passions and base fears; a fourth over deadness of spirit and hardness of Heart. These fill the Saints with trouble while they keep them in; much more when they prevail and break out. And as believers are full of trouble because of their own corruption, so also by reason of the corruptions of others. Their hearts bleed at the prophaneacts, and their eyes weep at the pride of other men.

These inward troubles are enough to fill us, but as *Ezekiel's* roll was full of woes, so our lives are full of troubles both within and without.

Outward troubles are of two sorts.

First, Ordinary, or those which come daily upon us, the labours and businesses of our Callings. The Apostle speaking of and to those that marry, saith, *Such shall have trouble in the flesh,* *1 Cor.* 7. 28. Flesh and troubles are married together, whether we marry or no, but they that are married marry with and march into new troubles. All our relations have their burdens as well as their comforts.

Secondly, Extraordinary troubles; and these are of three sorts. 1. Publike in the common calamities which fall upon the Kingdoms. 2. Upon the Churches which we live in. 3. Private troubles which befall our Dwellings and Families. 3. Personal troubles which fall upon our own selves. To these three kinds all our outward troubles are reducible, but the particulars of them are almost innumerable. What Paul saith of his perils (2 Cor. 11. 26.) we may say of our troubles, we are in troubles by Waters; in troubles by Robbers, in troubles by our own Countrymen; in troubles by the Heathen, in troubles in the City, in troubles in the Wilderness, in troubles in the Sea, in troubles among false Brethren. We are in Weariness and Painfulness, in Hunger and Thirst; in Cold and Nakedness, of all these troubles we may say as he (2 Cor. 12. 13) *They are without us*.

Again we have troubles in getting, troubles in keeping, and troubles in losing the things of this life. We have trouble in doing our duties, troubles for doing our duties, and troubles worst of all for not doing our duties, or for doing that which is not our duties. As some have troubles of conscience, so not a few have troubles for conscience.

Lastly, Besides all these troubles, whether of action or passion, we are also or ought to be (we seldom want occasion to be) full of the troubles of compassion to the troubles of others, though we our selves be free from trouble. Thus Paul speaks of himself (2 Cor. 12. 29) *With a weak and I am not weak, who is off-sences, and I burn yet*. And thus Paul charges us, *Weep with them that weep* (Rom. 12. 15). Remember, *that if we be bound with them, and them which suffer with us, as being your selves also in the body*, (Heb. 13. 3.) Sympathy is a Christian duty. Christ himself (our Head) is afflicted in all our afflictions; we also should be afflicted in the afflictions of one another as fellow members. He that hath no cross of his own, must take up and bear his brothers; and he that hath many of his own must bear a part of all his Brethrens crosses. Now, what between the troubles which we feel, and the troubles whereof we have a fellow-feeling, we must needs be full of troubles, few of dates and full of troubles. The report which old Adam made before Pharaoh of this life, (Gen. 47. 9.) may be a report of all our lives, when we have lived most, and lived best, *Few and evil have the days of*

into which any sort of nation of men fall: so it is a mercy that God hath bestowed and lenteth the state of mankin, considering the general trouble into which we are fallen. Let it not be a trouble to us that our dayes are few, seeing if our dayes were more our troubles would be more, and our sorrow would increase as the number of our years increased. He that is displeased because his dayes are few, is also displeased because his troubles are so few. We have little reason to be in love with this life because our dayes are few, and lesse because our troubles are many. But we have much reason to love God, who when we had prepared for our selves many troubles while we live, have contracted and epitomized our lives into a few dayes.

[illegible]

And whereas there are many varieties of flowers, three the chief. First, One of a sweet soft long flower. Secondly, Beauty and variety of colour. Thirdly, Softness and smoothness. In the first (I say) there are three parties in a flower, the petals, the stamens, and the pistil. The petals are all by, and speak of it not as flourishing, but withering, not in its rising up but in its falling down, and is insignificantly in relation to rising down. The stamens are in the middle, and are in relation to rising down. The pistil is at the bottom, and is in relation to rising down.

And is cut down.

Death is the scythe which cuts down these flowers, either first, Natural death, 1. By sickness, 2. By age: Or secondly Violent death, which is, 1. Casual, when a man is slain by accident, 2. Cruel, when a man is slain by murderers, 3. Legal, when a man is slain by the Magistrate. Hence observe,

Adam in his flourishing, is now in withering.

He cometh forth and is cut down, his standing is so small that it is not so much as mentioned. We are born to die, and we die as soon as we are born. Christ speaks to the Church, Canticles 2. 11, 12. Rise my love, for loe the winter is past, the flowers appear on the earth, the time of singing of birds is come, so we translate, but others thus, The time of singing is come. The same word in Tempus in the Hebrew signifies both to sing and to cut, we taking the former, add the word Birds (which is not at all in the Original) to fill up the sense, or to shew what singing is there meant, namely that which is most proper in the spring when flowers first appear, the singing of Birds. The other reading, as it is clear in the letter of the Hebrew, so it elegantly sets the point in hand. The flowers appear, the time of cutting is come, implying that flowers are cut even as soon as they appear. Such a flower is man, he cometh forth and is cut down. Thus David describes him, Psalm 103. 16. As for man, his days are as Grass, as a flower of the field, so he flourisheth, for the wind passeth over it, and it is gone, and the place thereof shall know it no more. Though the flower be not cut down with any instrument of iron, nor crop by the Plow, Nat. hand, yet the blast of wind blasts it, yea the gentle motion of the lib. 25. Air quickly blows off its beauty. The naturalist tells us of a plant esp. 13. lib. calceolaria, because it lasts but one day, as he doth also of 11. chap. 36. a worm called Pteromalus, because it lives but one day. Such a flower is man, or (as the Psalmist speaks) a worm and no man. Ierem fugi- Such a flower is man, or (as we may speak) a flower and no man, va apud Regem. The heathen Poet gives his wonder and observation of the Rose, that it flourisheth in the very budding. The Septuagint read the same word of Adam in the same tenour, He decays like a budding flower, that is, he decays in his very budding. As if Death did rise so early and watch for the flourishing flower, to crop or cut it. Virg. T. an. 100 down. And though some of these flowers stand till they wither, quam flo- ones, Satonum allegorizeth (Bees. 12. 5.) Till the Almond tree florescent de- shall cide. Sept.

shall flourish, that is, till gray Hairs; yet all the time of their standing they have been falling, and every hour which increaseth or swells their stalks, hath been also cutting of them down. And it would have been better for some, if they had been actually cut down in that state, which we distinctively call their *Flower*; while they were well-scented and beautiful; whereas standing long, they have not only decayed, but smelt ill upon their stalks. Man in his best estate is vain, and many who have stood beyond that, have proved far worse than vain.

Now lest this first similitude of a flower coming forth and cut down, should not reach the transitoriness of this dying thing called Man; therefore *Job* puts him upon his fullest speed, or rather upon the wing in his motion thorow the world, by a second similitude, which carrieth in it the hastiest swiftness, and the most infected chagableness.

His shadow is as a shadow and continueth not.

Shadows are caused by the interposition of any gross body between us and the Sun. Every shadow is dark, and darkness is but a great shadow. Hence there are two sorts of natural shadows. 1. The shadows of the Night, to which the Church alludes. (*Can. 2. 27.*) *Until the day break, and the shadows flee away.* 2. The shadows of the day; these are according to the motions of the Sun in continual motion or variation, sometimes on our right Hand, sometimes on our left, sometimes shorter, sometimes longer, and are longest in the evening, as the Prophet speaks. (*Jer. 4. 6.*) *The shadows of the evening are stretched out.* When the Sun riseth, the shadows of the night are not, and while the shadows of the day are, they continue not, but receive some change every moment. Such is man, he seeth as the shadow of the night before the day, and as the shadow of the day till night return again.

He continueth not.

Job. Scris.

substitutis, per

sticit, pro

manis.

Unde Job.

columna.

recta, a sua

do distat.

The Hebrew is, *He standeth not.* A Pillar is expressed by this word of this Root, because of its standing and firmness. Man is not a Pillar but a Shadow, or if he be a Pillar, he is but a Pillar of Smoke, which is carried and scattered with the Wind, as a shadow is altered or changed with the Sun. We read often of the shadow of Death, and our life is but a shadow, because it continueth

continua not. Death is a perfect shadow, and a shadow is the
faintness of our imperfect life. To have no shadow of turning
notes the perfection of God, (Job 1. 17.) To turn like a shadow
notes the imperfection of man. The Vulgar translates, *He con-*
tinua not in the same state. *in eodem p-
a-*
in permanet.

There is a threefold state of man. 1. A natural state. 2. A Vulg.
civil state. 3. A spiritual state. The two former of these, are
of little or no continuance, the third doth not alwayes continue
in the same state.

The natural state of man may be considered.

First, In reference to his body, this suffers an alteration every
day, either a perfect alteration, as in those that are young, or
a corruptive alteration, as in those who are of full age: Yea,
the perfective alteration of the Body tends to a corruptive alter-
ation, and while we are growing stronger, we are hastning mot
only to weaknes, but to dissolution.

Secondly, The natural state of man may be considered in re-
ference to his mind: This continues not in one state. 'Tis the
sole priviledge of God to be one within. He saith Job. Chap.
23. 13. *It is in one mind, who can turn him?* Men are in twenty
minds, they cannot but turn. We use to say of several men,
So many men, so many minds: But we may observe in the same
man, *How many minds!* The minde of man is more mutable
then the Wind or Weather. Now he is pleased, anon he is angry,
now he likes, anon he dislikes, now he loves, anon he hates, now
he wills, by and by he wills not: The Will, the Affections, the
Understanding of man, are so often in new habits and changes of
Dresse, are shaped in such various forms of Opinion and Judg-
ment, that 'tis hard to say what any mans minde is, and there are
not many who know their own mindes.

And as man continues not in his natural state, whether of
body or mind, so his civil state is of as little continuance: whe-
ther we look upon him, 1. In his Honour, or 2. In his Power, or
3. In his Riches, or 4. In his Relations. I leave the Reader to en-
large upon these common places of mans mutability: Day unto
day makes report, and every daies experience is a Sermon of
these things: Yea, how many have we seen in one day, honourable
and dishonourable, in fulness of power, and emptied of all their
power, abounding in riches, and brought to beggery, compassed
about with friends and kindred, with wife and children, and yet
forsaken

forsoaken of all before the evening. *Their inward thoughts* (Psalm David, Psal. 49. 11.) *is, that their house shall continue for ever, and their dwelling places to all generations. Nevertheless man being in honour (power or riches) abideth not.* If he abides, these do not; and if these abide, he doth not; and the longest that both these have abode in any example since the foundation of the world, is not long enough to warrant this conclusion, that, *They did abide.*

Thirdly, Consider man in his spiritual estate; where his continuance is most steddly, yet there he continues not in the same state. Some have a spiritual estate, which is of as little continuance as mans natural or civil state is. The Hypocrite appears to others, and is often conceited of himself full of the flower of Grace, but he quickly disappears, he is cut down like a flower, and fleeth away like a shadow. The parable saith of such a man, (*Matth. 13. 20, 21.*) *He hearth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it, yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while; that is, he continueth not: His leaf of outside profession falls, and his goodly form of godlinesse without power, breaks to pieces upon the least blast or touch of persecution. And if persecution do not kill his profession, it will die alone, or rather, it will decay alone, for indeed it never had any life.*

Now, as temporary believers have total decays, and continue not at all in their spiritual estate; so true believers may have temporary decays. The way of a man in Christ doth not flee like a shadow, but increaseth more and more unto the perfect day (*Prov. 4. 16.*) And that Scripture which takes up *Jobs* similitude, comparing all flesh to grasse, and the godlinesse thereof to the flower of the field, the grasse withereth, the flower fadeth, doth yet by way of opposition, assure us, that the Word of God abideth for ever, (*Isa. 40. 8.*) Now, as the Word of God, so that Grace which is revealed to us and wrought in us by the Word and Spirit of God abideth for ever. And yet, though a state of Grace, wheresoever it is doth continue for ever, yet it doth not continue alwayes in the same state: And that not only because it is gradually changed by way of improvement here (till it take its highest degree in glory, where it shall know no change at all, either by way of abatement or of improvement) but also because it is often changed by way of gradual abatement. *Peter* did not alwayes continue in the same state of faith, nor the Church

of Ephraim in the same state of love, though their faith and love did continue. What soul can say it continues ever in the same degree of spiritual strength, health, life and enlargements? Though the whole time of a Christian in this world be a growing time, yet consider it in parts, and we shall find many declining times. Thus as man continues not at all in his natural and civil state, so his spiritual Estate doth not alwaies continue the same: and so of all it may be said, *He continueth not.*

JOB -Chap. 14. Verf. 3, 4.

And dost thou open thine eyes upon such an one, and bringest him into judgment with thee.

Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? nor one.

JOB having shawdowed the frailty of man under divers similitudes, in the close of the 13th chapter, and in the beginning of this, draws down from all this passionate question, at the 3^d verse, *And dost thou open thy eye upon such an one?* Upon such an one as I, who am as a rotten thing, or, as a garment that is moth eaten: Upon such a one as I, who am of few daies and full of trouble: Upon such a one as I, who am like a flower coming forth, and presently cut down: Upon such a one as I, who am like a shadow fleeing away and continuing not; *Dost thou open thine eyes upon such an one, and bringest me into judgment with thee?*

וְלֹא יָדָע

Eriam super hunc.

Such an one, is a term of diminution; Job debaseth and lowneth himself, *Such an one*, is such a poor one, a man so inconsiderable, a man who besides the common condition of men, which is low enough, is yet brought lower by these afflictions?

Terminus diminuent.

Such an one, sometimes increaseth the sense and heightens it. (Neb. 6. 11.) When Sanballat and the Enemies of the Jews by secret practices, and cunning plots would have discouraged Nehemiah, telling him what designs were against him, and perswading him timely to avoid his own fall, that so the work might fall: he answers, *Should such a man as I flee?* such a man, A man in such a place, and having such a power, a man so trusted, and under such engagements, a man upon whose care and conduct

the welfare of a Nation, and the advancement of publick good so much depends? Should such a man as I flee? there the sense is raised: But here it falls, *Such an one*, is a poor one, a mean one, Dost thou open thy mouth to speak against, or thine eye to look upon such an object?

Job having considered his own estate in common with that of Mankind, concludes, *And dost thou set thy eye upon such an one?*

Whence Observe,

That the due consideration and knowledge of what we are, leads us to low thoughts of our selves.

There is no man proud of himself, but he that is ignorant of himself: We are lifted up with high thoughts above what we are, because we have not true thoughts of what we are; if once we saw what moth-eaten garments, what rotten things, what fading flowers, what fleeing shadows, what decaying, dying creatures we are, every one would say to God in holy wonder, Dost thou take notice of *such an one*? of so mean an one, as I. We should not aspire to be counted *some bodies*, some great ones in the world, but we should look upon our selves as *no bodies*, as unaccountable in the world, such as deserve not, that the great, the high God should vouchsafe us as a cast of his eye. This is *Job's* sense of himself,

Dost thou open thy eye upon such an one as I?

The opening of the eye is taken two waies.

*Oculi Dei
providentiam
denotat.*

First, In a way of Fatherly care and Providence: Thus *David* speaks (*Psal. 144. 3. Lord, what is man that thou takest knowledge of him, or the Son of man that thou makest account of him.*) So *Job* (chap. 7. 17.) *What is man that thou shouldst magnifie him, and that thou shouldst set thy heart upon him, that is, that thou shouldst take care of him, and make such provision for him.* When *Herakiah* was in a day of rebuke and blasphemy, he spread *Rabshakeh's* railing letter before the Lord, and prayed, *Lord bow down thine ear and hear, open Lord thy eye and see.* 2 King. 19. 16. that is, take care of me and of the people under me; the mouth of *Rabshakeh* is open to threaten and revile, let thy eye be open to see and prevent all the evils which he threatneth.

Further, Opening the eye is an act of little or no difficulty; it is as easie to open the eye as to turn the hand: to give a look

is a small gift. Thus we may understand Job, as if he thought himself unworthy of the least motion of Providence. Dost thou vouchsafe to open thine eye upon such a one? I am not worthy thou shouldst take notice of me, or of my condition. A glance of thy eye is more then I can look for.

I will not prosecute this sense, both because I handled it, chap. 7. 17. as also, because though it be a truth, yet, I conceive, it is not the proper truth of this place.

Secondly, As opening of the eye signifies providence and care *Aperire oculo* to do us good, so watchfulness to discover and find out what *los* in ali- we are, or what evil we have done: for as in Scripture to open *quem est* in- the hand is to be liberal, bountiful, and munificent (*Psal. 145. 16.*) *tentis oculis* *Tu* openest thy hand and *satisfies* the desire of every living thing. *enim valde* So to open the eye upon a man, notes diligent inspection over *observare*, him, or an accurate observation of his wayes, goings, actings, to *quid rerum* bring him to a strict account for all: he that palleth a man by, *agat*, *Draſt.* and will not bring him to judgment for what he hath done, is said

(in our common speech) to connive or wink at him. He that winks at another, will not see though he doth see. It is said (*Act. 17. 30.*) That God winked at the former times of their ignorance, but now he commands all men every where to repent, because he hath appointed a day wherein he will judge the world. There is another meaning of winking which I have opened (chap. 8. 4.) but this is a truth, God winked, that is, he did not take much notice, or follow men up and down, to see what they did in those times, because they were in the darkness of ignorance, they had but little light to do good by, therefore he was not so strict to observe what evil they did; so that the opening of the Eye, implyeth a critical, or judiciary inspection, as well as a paternal, fatherly, careful inspection; and so we are to Expound this place, as is evident from the sixth verse of this chapter, where Job *Contemni* desires that which is contrary to opening the eye, the turning *expascit* us from him, that he might rest till he shall accomplish as a hireling his *de severitate* daies. He that openeth his Eye to a man, turneth his face to him; *divini judicii* now seeing man is weak, and his daies determined, turn from *loquatur* him with thine Eye, or why dost thou set thine Eye upon him? Sanct, As if he had said, Dost it become thy greatness and Majesty, to take such strict notice of all the motions of so poor a creature as I am? or dost it become thy goodness and mercy to be so severe to watch me so narrowly, to look after me so exactly, that I cannot stir

but thou observest it, and numberest my very steps?

*Sum stoma-
cho & indig-
natione le-
gendum est:
Itane super
hoc folium &
fig'm am, &c.
Mer.*

Job speaks in a kind of passion, and the gloss which some inter-
preters put upon his words, renders them, not only very unbecom-
ing, but very sinful; as if he thought it altogether unfit for God
to eye what he did, or to bring him into judgment for it: *Hea-*
thens said of their *Jupiter*, *he was not at leisure to look at small*
matters; but it is a great dishonour to God, to say he cannot
look after the smallest matters and motions of the creature: We
cannot dishonour God more, then by counting this a dishonour
to him. *The lowest persons and actions are not beneath the observa-*
tion of the most high God. *Job's* intendment was to move God to
compassion, not to put himself beneath his consideration.

Hence observe,

That our frailty is a good pleadable argument to move God to deal
mildly and gently with us.

I am a weak poor creature, therefore pitty me, therefore
spare me; we must never plead our fullness before God, but we
may plead our emptiness; we must never plead our goodness, nor
our worthiness, but we may our sinfulness and unworthiness.
The later clause of the verse shews us what *Job* desires, when he
deprecates the opening of Gods eye upon him.

*Verbum est
futuri tem-
poris, quod
debitum con-
notat & de-
corum, ut
Gen. 18. 25.*

And bringest me into judgment with thee.

Observe here the change of the person: He spake before in
the third person, *Dost thou open thine eye upon such an one?* here
he speaks in the first person, *Dost thou bring me to judgment*
with thee? He relates to his personal condition and makes ap-
plication to himself, *Dost thou bring me into judgment with thee?*
I shall not stay upon these words, having often (from like pas-
sages) shewed how unable man is to stand before God in judg-
ment. *Job* insisteth much upon it, being provoked by his friends
charging him with a conceit of self-righteousness, which he dis-
claimed as often as they charge him with it. *Dost thou bring me*
to judgment with thee? Men of eminency will not contend with
those who are much inferiour to them, they cannot honour
themselves by such contests, as was lately shewed at large (cap.
13. 25.) upon that expostulation, *Wilt thou break a leaf driven to*
and fro? &c. Thus *Job* pleads here, *Dost thou bring me to judge-*
ment with thee? I am no match for thee, there is no equality
between us, thou canst not raise thy Name by casting me down:
thou

*Hac perti-
nent omnia
que hoc loco
copiose dis-
seris Job de
miseria hu-
mana vite,
ut Deus tam
miseretur,
nec tam du-
ris experi-
mentis pro-
bet. Merh.*

thou mayest honour thy mercy and compassion, by pardoning me, but not thy power by overthrowing me. *The worst and weakest of sinful men, are the best suit to set off the beauty and strength of mercy.*

Yet men are not therefore free from the judgments of God because they are low and mean: for God will judge the lowest, even such as lie on dunghills, or grind in the Mill: the great God of Heaven and Earth will bring the least to judgment, as well as the greatest. The Rabbins have a conceit that some shall be exempt or privileged from the judgment of God hereafter, because they endure much pain and poverty here: but these are vain conceits: All must come to judgment, though but few shall stand in judgment. God will glorify his Justice in casting the lowest of wicked men to the lowest hell, as well as high and lofty ones.

Take one Observation from both parts of the verse last together, *Doest thou open thy eye upon such an one as I am, and bringest me to judgment.*

There must be a discerning of the person and cause, before either can be brought to judgment.

You must open the eye to see what the man is, and what he hath done, before sentence be given upon him. The Law forbiddeth the Judge to receive gifts, because gifts blind the Eye of the Judge: a Judge had need to have his Eyes open, to discern the cause and very circumstance of it. If a gift put on the receivers Eye, how shall the Judge discern him that gives it. We cannot judge what we do not know, nor can we judge aright without a right knowledge.

Job having pleaded his weakness, pleads his sinfulness.

Verse 4. *Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? No one.*

As if he had said, Lord, if thou openest thine eye upon me, thou must needs find me unclean, full of sin and defiled with sin: Nor canst thou expect any other of me, for, who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? Surely not one; therefore do not open thine eye severely upon me, do not bring me into judgment with thee, thou art of pure Eyes then to behold iniquity.

I shall first open the words and give the sense as they contain an entire proposition, *A clean thing cannot be brought out of*

an unclean, and then I shall consider *Job's* scope in using this plea.

Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?

*mundi-
siam niten-
tem denotat.*

*Now immun-
dus, pulchra
est illius tur-
pitudinis &
sordium ap-
pellatio in
quam squalor
quidam mor-
rentis animi
& sordidatus
habitus, cru-
oris & san-
guinis macu-
la, nubila,
crassa omnia
turbida im-
mundaque
cadunt.*
Pined.

The word which we render *clean*, signifies shining, beautiful, a substance so pure and transparent that we may see through it so pure that it is free from all spot or defilement, from all blackness and darkness: Who can bring such a clean thing out of an unclean? The *Hebrew* word (*Tame*) comes near the word (*Contaminatum*) which is used by the Latines for unclean; and it speaks the greatest pollution, the sordidness and filthiness of habit, the Goar of Blood, the muddiness of Water, whatsoever is loathsome or unlovely, noisome or unsightly: All these meet in and make up the meaning of this word, *Who can bring a clean thing out of this uncleanness?*

Clean and unclean may be taken two ways; either first corporally and externally. Or secondly, morally and internally. *Job* speaks not of the former, the uncleanness here meant is moral or internal.

Which is also twofold, First, the uncleanness of our natures. Secondly, Of our actions, the uncleanness which lies in the inward man, puts it self forth in the outward man, and so we are unclean both within and without.

Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? This question may undergo a threefold exposition. First thus, who can bring a morally clean person out of a person originally unclean? The word which we render *bring* is *give* in the *Hebrew*, who can give a clean thing out of an unclean? Which may well refer to the birth of man; So the word is used (*Gen. 17. 16.*) God promiseth *Abraham* to bless *Sarah* and give him a son of her: So here, *Who can give a clean thing?* That is, cause it to be born of an unclean? *Job* layes his hand upon his birth-sin; as if he had said, all men are naturally unclean, therefore the Children born of them are unclean too.

Secondly, *Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?* May refer to the action of the same man, take *Job* or any other person who is morally unclean by nature, this man being unclean cannot bring forth a clean thing, that is, a clean action; As the root is, such is the fruit; we are such fruit as our parents are, unclean both, and our fruit is such as we the parents are, unclean both.

Third-

Thirdly, *Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean?* May note the change of the same person from his moral uncleanness into moral cleanness, who can make a person clean who was born unclean? The Hebrew particle (*Min*) rendered, *out of*, hath a double use, sometimes it notes the Original of a thing, *That which is Originated is like its Original*. Again it notes also change and mutation, *Who can bring a clean out of unclean?* That is, *Who can change unclean into clean?* Besides the word which we render *bring*, signifies *to make a change*, *Heb. y. 12. Who are thou that art afraid of the Son of man, who shall be made as the grass?* The Hebrew is, *who shall be given*, that is, changed as the grass.

id originis & mutationis nota.

*id dare pro-
ficere usur-
patur.*

Thus we have a threefold Interpretation of the words. The first respecting the extraction of one person from another. All persons are unclean, because they come from an unclean root.

A second referring to the actions of the same person. That which is done by man cannot but be unclean, because man himself is unclean who doth it.

A third respecting the change of the person himself from what he was. *Who can make an unclean person clean?* this is a work too hard for any Creature, Man or Angel. Man cannot by his own power make a natural man, much less a spiritual man; he cannot give any man a *being*, much less a holy *being*.

First, Observe from the connection, *Job* having described mans life, *Few of dayes and full of troubles, like a shadow, and like a flower cut down and withered*: He now descends to mans uncleanness, as if he would lead us to the Spring-head, and cause of all our sorrows: This is the method and dependance of *Jobs* discourse, which teacheth us,

That the length of our troubles, and shortness of our lives, are caused by the corruption and uncleanness of our Natures.

Are our lives troublesome? Is the scean of our actions intangled? Sin hath done it. Is the thread of life cut off? Have we but a few dayes? Sin hath procured this. We are unclean, therefore we are dying, fading, withering. In all, whether personal or publick troubles, we may answer our selves with this, we have that we deserve, the root of our miseries is within us, we may thank our own evil dispositions that our condition is

so

so full of evil. God made man upright and happy, he gave him a life wherein he might have continued long and long, even for ever. Though man might have died as created, yet there was no necessity he should die till he had sinned. Both the troubles of this life and death it self, are debts of penalty for our uncleanness; and when we are once perfectly cleansed, we shall never be under any arrest for these debts.

Secondly, Observe,

Sin is an unclean thing.

They who see the face of sin in the Glass of the Law, see the most ugly and deformed Object in the World. If Virtue could be seen, she would attract all Eyes and Hearts to her. *Virtue is an invisible beauty.* So if sin could be seen, all Eyes would turn away from it: *Sin is an invisible deformity.* The Spirit of God doth as it were strive for comparisons to set out the ugliness of sin: It is compared to the blood and pollution of an Infant, (*Ezek. 16. 6.*) to the corruption of a rotten Sepulchre, (*Rom. 3. 13.*) to the scum of a seething Pot, (*Ezek. 24. 11, 12.*) All these comparisons shew us somewhat of the ugliness of sin, but it is ugly beyond compare. How sad is their mistake who think to adorn themselves with sin? Who put on pride as a cloak upon their backs, and Unrighteousness as a Crown or a Diadem upon their Heads: Who boast as if they had then *Holy* clothes on, when they are clothed with *Unholiness*, and make to themselves *Beauty* of the blackest spots of sin! The Apo-

Caro in scri- *stle, (Gal. 3. 12.)* calleth us to put on another kind of Dre-
psura male *ss* *To be clothed with Humility, Meekness, Humbleness of Mind,*
audis. Mi- *Charity;* these are shining, pure, white Raiment indeed: Our
rum non est si *righteousness is a filthy ragg, if we boast in it, or would be justifi-*
arundinis ra- *fied in it: Then how filthy a ragg is our Unrighteousness, espe-*
mus aut cich- *cially if we boast of it, or justify our selves in it!*

te vacuum sit *Thirdly, Observe,*

a medulla, aut *Man being naturally unclean, his Children and Posterity are*
noxium ali- *unclean too.*

quod habeat; *John 3. 6. That which is born of the flesh, is flesh.* The Copy can-
Aut si E- *no be better then the Original, nor the effect nobler then the*
thiopissa fili- *cause; This flesh, hath an ill name all the Scripture over: 'Tis no*
us Ethiopi- *wonder if that which is poysonous bring forth a poysonous seed,*
cum ab ea co- *or that a stinging Serpent procreats a stinging Serpent; a Toad,*
lorem trahit. *a Toad; or that a wolf brings forth a wolf: The son of an Ethi-*
Sanct. *opian*

The natural complexion of every child is framed by natural generation, man is born unclean, and in his mind is like himself. God created man in his own image, after his image, and man begets man after the image of himself, and his image.

There are two things in this uncleanness.

First, There is a privation of that comeliness and beauty which was stamp'd upon man in his creation: Some define Original uncleanness to be only a privation of a white complexion; and that it is one part of it, all agree, but there is something positive in it too - for it was if a man who is richly clothed, richly adorned, should not only have all his goodly garments pulled off, which were an abatement to him; but should be thrown into the dirt, or have dirt cast upon him. *Joseph* brethren took off his pretty-coloured garment, and then threw him into a pit, to rot in it. That strip of dirt of our bodily array our original lightness, and then drenches or mingles us rather all over, or over head and ears in mire and filth.

There are seven considerable properties in this natural uncleanness.

First, It is an Internal uncleanness. A spot upon the garment is bad enough, a spot upon the face is far worse, but an infection in the flesh is yet worse, and that is worse of all which is seated in the bowels, or hath seized on the vitæ: the uncleanness here spoken of is not as a spot upon the garment, or dirt upon the face, but a sore in the flesh. A sore is nothing but the uncleanness of the flesh gathered to a head in vice. It is thus a rot in the bowels or intestines, in the heart or liver; for *the whole and conference is defiled*; *1 Tim. 1. 5.*

Secondly, It is an abiding uncleanness, all the water in the Ocean cannot wash it out, all the fire in Hell cannot burn it out; Hell fire shall never consume this dross. Though wicked men in this life be cast into the fire of Gods judgments, and he kindle it with the bellows of his wrath, yet their dross remains. *probare si vis non carere formâ* (*Jer. 6. 30.*) they will not be purged in this life, and in the next life they shall not be purged. They shall be forever in punitive flames, but they shall not smoulder (as Papists dream) any purgative flames. The corruption of nature will depart from them. The uncleanness of the flesh is the

of the Merial, the dross of Mans Nature is harder to separate than the dross of Metal: the lead in that infernal mixture will not consume, nor will the Billows break, yet the dross of Lead will not out of Reprobates. And as fire and brimstone shall not fetch this uncleannesse out of Reprobates in the next life, so Grace and Mercy do not fetch it fully out of the Elect in this life: they who are renewed and regenerate, are yet in part Carnal and corrupt. *Grace is in a continual conflict with corruption, but Grace only makes a good conquest.*

Thirdly, It is an abounding uncleannesse, it is not in the hand or face only, but in and upon the whole Man. It goes quite thorough. There is not the least part free: Man from Head to Heel, from top to toe is described unclean. (*Isaiah 64. 6.*) *The Lord looked down from Heaven, to see if there were any that understood and feared His face: they are all gone out of the way, and become vile, as all were.* There is a double uncleannesse of this uncleannesse. First, it doth defile all men. Secondly, of every man. Not one man in the world but is unclean, and not one part in any Man but is unclean. survey him in his Understanding, Will, Memory, Affections, Conscience, Eye, Hand, Tongue, Feet, all the parts of the Body, and powers of the Soul are unclean. *A Graceless heart is in sin and death, the eye is dead, the Soul, and Spirit is in bondage.*

Concupiscencia est appetitus inordinatus per quem superiora inferioribus servimus, aut
vicia est appetitus inordinatus per quem superiora inferioribus contumaciter resistimus.
Janfon.

Fourthly, It is an active or a powerful uncleannesse, stirring up an unholy war in man, against the holy will of God. In an inordinate appetite accompanies it, or it is an inordinate appetite causing the inferior parts of the Soul stubbornly to resist the superiour, or the superiour barely to submit unto and serve the inferior. This makes Lust a King and Reason a Slave, yet this would make Grace a Slave. As *Pauls* experience teacheth us, (*Rom. 7. 23.*) *But I see another law in my members, stirring up against the law of the mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin, which is in my members.* That is, it doth captivate men in part, and hath a design to captivate me altogether.

Fifthly, it is a diffusive or an infectious uncleannesse, like a Leprosie or a Plague. Now, as good is by so much the better, by how much it is the more diffusive, so evil is so much the worse by how much it is the more diffusive. This evil is diffusive two ways. First, by way of Propagation, from Adam to all his posterity. Secondly, by way of Imitation, and so one man doing evil,

God another back and catcher. He is indeed a back catcher. This is the reason why David is found crying, I am exceeding tired in this point. *He is a back catcher* because he will not catch us in our sins. He will not catch us in our sins, his wickedness may spread. It may poison the heart of a King. I will not put my feet upon the temptation. The Apostle (Heb. 12. 13.) warns the Church of this danger. *lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled.* Though this uncleanliness doth not infect by infection only (which was the error of Pelagius) yet it infects through and commonly by imitation. Hence Moses charges the people of Israel to have nothing to do with the Canaanites, lest they should be misled by their example. And when they acted against this rule, they quickly broke all rules. (Plam. 106. 36.) *They were corrupted with the Canaanites* (then immediately follows) *and learned their works.* He means not woodmen, Art, or Agriculture of peace, or war, but of false worship and idolatry. *They loved their idols which were a snare unto them.* Evil men endanger the good, as bad humours do the blood, or an infected head the whole neighbourhood.

Sixthly, it is a seducing and enticing uncleanness. All the beauty in the world did never allure so many as the discomity and foul face of unfaith. It was prophesied of Christ (in reference to his outward appearance) *He hath no form nor comeliness, there is no beauty that we should desire him.* Hence the Prophet foretels what entertainment he was like to finde in the world: *He is despised and rejected of men, we as it were hid our faces from him and we esteemed him not.* Ill. 2. 3. Beauty and comeliness are the attractives, the Loadstone of Love. Christ was not loved because he did not appear beautiful: Lot is loved though it be unbeautiful: There is no form or comeliness in him, nothing why it should be desired, yet it is desired and highly esteemed by all sorts of men. They dote upon it, and run mad with Love for it, as the Chacefull Beauty in the world.

Seventhy, it is a murderous and a mortal uncleanness, there is no escaping death if we live in it. This uncleanness doth not only spoil our inward beauty, and put the soul out of fashion, but it destroyes the life of the Soul, it is the mine as well as the dishonour of man.

Now all men became unclean, bring forth all unclean passions, (which rise from the second corruption.) So every person is unclean, the actions which he brings forth are unclean too. *Whosoever born was hath a sinful* Conscience mankind under two names, Regenerate and Unregenerate. The Unregenerate are so unclean, that whatsoever they do is altogether unclean. *Do men gather Grapes of thorns, and figs of thistles? Would the tree good and the fruit good, would the tree be evil, the fruit cannot be good.* It is because the heart is evil, that is, God complains *Gen. 6. 5. All the imaginations of the heart are evil continually.* The imagination gives shape to every thing which the mind works upon, all that man thinks and fashions, all the Creatures he makes within him are unclean. The works of a natural man are unclean for the most part in the very matter, but all that he doeth is unclean for the manner, his Hands are unclean, and by his banding he makes all unclean. The mind and conscience of a wicked man being defiled, he is *abominable, unclean, and is every good work reprobate.* (Tit. 1. 15) that is, he knows not how to do a good work, he is not handsome-handed, or rather not handsome-hearted at any good work. He knows neither how to conceive nor so much less to delight in any thing that is good, that's the meaning of being Reprobate *to evil, good works though he may let about many good works, yet at best they do but bungle at them all. Some good works are so good that no man can do them all, they cannot be done finally, though they may be done imperfectly.* Such are, to love God, to fear, to believe, to wait, to rejoice in him, and to hope for his mercy. These works are so good, that, as no wicked man can do them at all, so, no good man can sin in doing them. These works are so good, that the least degree of them is good and therefore though they are acted often weakly yet they are never acted wickedly. But there are good works which a carnal man will be doing in, *to pray, to hear the Word, &c.* These he will be doing, but he is reprobate to the doing of them, he defiles and spoils them in the doing. The case is put, *Eccl. 2. 14. If a man that is unclean carry holy vessels, shall it not be unclean.* The Prophet states it affirmatively, ceremonially holy vessels are defiled with our spiritually unholiness, The uncleanness of the giver renders his gift unclean, *The sacrifices of the wicked are an abomination to the Lord.* Their prayers

sole cause, is not sinful: But good works are not wrought solely by the Spirit of God, the Spirit and mind of man are both co-operant and instrumental in that work: Now an effect which proceeds from divers subordinate causes, takes its qualification from the lowest as well as from the highest. Though a Writer have exact skill, yet if his Pen be naught, the Writing cannot be exactly.

Lastly, (say some) good works are pleasing to God, but that which is sinful doth not please God.

To which I Answer.

That our good works do not please God as done by us, but as done in Christ: He is the Altar which sanctifies all our gifts, he is our High Priest who takes away the iniquity of our holy things, that we may be accepted in all our offerings. We through a Mediator that God is pleased with what we do, and pardons our defects.

Thirdly, The words may import a change of the same person, who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean.

Hence Observe.

Man cannot convert or make himself clean, nor can any man make another clean.

Man cannot more sanctify himself or another, when he can condemn himself or another. But you will say: man is often exhorted to cleanse himself (Isa. 1. 15. 18.) Wash you, make you clean, (2 Cor. 7. 1.) Cleanse these promises, let us cleanse our selves from all filthiness of flesh and Spirit.

I Answer.

First, If these Texts be understood of persons Regenerate, as that of the Apostle clearly is, then it is true, they who are already cleansed may further cleanse themselves, for though we do not co-operate in the first conversion (there we are utterly passive) yet we do in the second: We cannot begin holiness, but we may and ought to perfect holiness in the fear of the Lord. We cannot work our own Salvation, but we may work out our own Salvation. They who have received the Spirit, are fitted to carry on Spiritual work.

And though the Text in Isaiah speak of persons unregenerate, yet it is not vain to say even to such, Wash you, make you clean. An unclean person may apply himself to the means of cleansing: They who have no grace, yet have reason, and God deals with

They which are natural cleane; they which are dead in sin and
 uncleans, may hear the word of life and live. The dead and
 uncleans are invited to the means of life and cleansing, and God in
 the use of means hath promised to cleanse and enliven them, but
 man of himself cannot cleane himself, nor make himself alive, when
 he is, or others are. As our sanctification is the will of God,
 so it is the work of God too. 'Tis neither our own power, nor the
 power of any creature, which gives us the new creation, for the
 last words of the verse resolve, *Who can bring a cleane thing out of*
uncleane? *Who can forgive sins but God only?*

That is, No man can do it. Some read this interrogatively,
 or by way of question, *who can bring a cleane thing out of un-*
cleane? canne one? or is there not one that can? we negatively there
 do not one that can: no man can do it.

If we take (as we safely may) the former reading, the que-
 stion affirms, Is there not one? yea, there is one, and he is
 who can bring a cleane thing out of unclean: For the Scriber
 (*Mat. 2. 7.*) *Who can forgive sins but God only?* For who can
 cleanse a soul but God only? God only of unclean, can make it cleane.
 He who can raise up children to Abraham out of stones, and alter
 the course of nature, he can make the Leper change his spot, and
 the Blind more his sight, for God nothing is impossible, but to
 man many things are impossible, and there is nothing more im-
 possible then this, the cleansing of the spiritually unclean. As that
 only can make and continue a cold body hot, which is it self and
 of its self is hot, so he only can make an unclean thing cleane,
 who is himself and of himself is cleane, God is cleane, and
 there is no spot in him, therefore he can make us cleane, and take
 out all our spots. The Chaldeo Paraphrast takes the word, *One*, for
 the description of God; or for the name of God. And so this
 place is paralleld by that (*Mat. 2. 7.*) which according to the
 letter of the Greek is to be read thus, *Who can forgive sins but one,*
or the one God?

Unde quicquid mundum est a Deo mundum habet. Aquiln.
Unde in Unum decipitur a Chaldeo pro Dei descriptione & quasi nomine. Clarum sa-
ne est respici mediatorem, qui unus purificationem faciat.

Some expound this *One*, strictly of Jesus Christ, who was de-
 signed to that work when he came into the world, who is the
 great cleanser: In whom a Fountain is opened to wash for sinne
 and

Non unus,
nomen unus
Quis dabit
mundum ex
homine con-
aminato pec-
catu, nisi De-
us qui unus
est, qui re-
mittat ipsi?
Chald. Non-
tu qui solus
es. Vulg.
Solus Deus
potest ex im-
mundo facere
mundum
condonando
peccata, nam
cujus pecca-
tum condona-
tum est pri-
us est. Dro.
Sicut de fri-
gido facere
calidum est
ejus, quod per
se calidum
est ita de im-
mundo facere
mundum est
ejus qui per

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and for uncleanness, and washes himself clean from all his iniquities, and purgeth those he loveth, and purgeth all his iniquities. It is that clean, pure, holy thing, and he being so, make us so, too. He is made to us of God, Wisdom, Righteousness, and Sanctification, or cleanness.

Christ bringeth clean out of unclean, by removing a twofold uncleanness: First, the guilt of sin when he pardons. Secondly, the filth of sin when he sanctifies.

From this whole Doctrine of mans uncleanness we learn.

First, *Man cannot oblige God.*

What hath man to boast of? will any one be proud of his filthy garments, or of a spot in his face? much less can we boast who have a spot upon our hearts, and are all over-spotted in our lives.

Secondly learn,

That in our confession of sin, we should lay our hand upon our birth-sin.

The sense of our natural uncleanness humbles most, and we should often reflect upon it, that we may be more humbled. We cannot shift off our sin upon the temptation of Satan, or the solicitation of men; we have the root of the matter in our selves. Job was most sensible of the filthiness of his nature: he had many sins, but he saw this at the bottome of them all.

It is our duty to mourn for Actual sins, but chiefly for Original sin. We must weep over the streams, but most over the Fountain; The heart of man hath not laboured more to corrupt any man, then this about mans natural corruption. The old Pelagians dressed up Nature very fine, and would at least persuade us it is not so bad, or so opposite to good as some would make it. They told us it hath some disposition to good, and that if helped a little it would come on to do good. But at this day follow them, if not in the same steps, yet in the same path: both have darkened Counsel by words without knowledge.

Thirdly, *If all men be unclean then every man had need of washing.* Thou shalt not wash my feet, said Peter to Christ. Job 13. 8. If I wash thee not (saith Christ) thou hast no part in me. Then he praises, Lord, wash, not only my feet but my head. So Christ speaks thus to every soul. If I wash thee not, thou hast no part in me: Christ is a clean Head, and he cleareth all his members.

Fourthly, *The thought of our general uncleanness, should provoke us to bless God that there is a Fountain open for sin and uncleanness.* Fountains should be as welcome to those who are dry,

and

as to those who are thirsty. When *Hagar* was thirsty, God shewed her a fountain of water: When *Samsun* was very thirsty, God opened a fountain in the jaw, and he drank and was revived. We are filthy, and God opens a fountain, he sends our leprous souls to the fountain of his sons blood, and bids us wash and be clean: When our hands are unclean, is not a basin of water welcome? Our souls are unclean, O how welcome should the blood of Christ be unto us? Bless God, who, as he hath discovered our uncleanness, so a fountain, that we may wash away our uncleanness. How wonderful are the workings of divine love, that we who were all spots and unclean, shall at last be presented unto God perfectly clean, *not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing*, Eph. 5. 27.

Having opened the sense of these words, as they contain this doctrinal proposition of mans naturall uncleanness: there is yet somewhat considerable in their scope; why doth *Job* speak of this uncleanness?

Some give this for his scope, as if *Job* from his original uncleanness would extenuate his actual uncleanness, or that he ought to be pardoned by grace, because he was polluted by nature. As if he had said, *Lord I was born iniquitous, and therefore cannot but be sinful*, no wonder if I fruitless grow, and my seed barren, *root of evil is in me*. But this was (in proportion) as far from the minde of *Job*, as it is from the truth of God. Besides, that we are born sinful and cannot chuse but sin, is no extenuation, but an aggravation of our sin. That, sin is not only our act, but our nature, leaves us without desert of pity, or matter of apology. We pity a man who by accident hath taken poison and is sick of it, but who pities a serpent, whose nature is poisonous, or such creatures to whom poison is as food. When *David* confesseth (Psal. 51.) *In iniquity was I conceived, &c.* Was he sowing a fig leaf over his uncleanness? or covering it with carnal reasonings? no marvel though I bring forth sin, who was conceived in sin. No marvel if I conceive iniquity, who was brought forth in iniquity. No, *David* doth not excuse, but humble himself; he doth not challenge mercy, but see his need of mercy because he was conceived in sin, and brought forth in iniquity. Such also (I conceive) was the frame of *Jobs* spirit in making this confession, and pouring out this complaint upon his birth-sin.

His design was, First to abase himself, to make his heart mor-

E e e e

pliable

*Quasi innuat
Job non debe-
re Deum ho-
minem punire
ob peccatum
ad quod est
prone ex se-
se, sed sui
oblitus hoc
dicis. Merc.*

pliable and ready to submit unto saddest dispensations. I am unclean, and is it any wonder that the holy God, who cannot behold any unclean thing, should throw an unclean person over head and ears into the Waters of affliction?

*Ex nature
sue corrupti-
ne sperat De-
um facilius
pertrahere,
adveniam si-
bi dandum ne
se ira gravi-
ter offligat.
Merc.*

Secondly, He speaks this as a motive to compassion, desiring the Lord to mitigate his sorrows while he aggravated his sin, yea to cease from afflicting, because he knew (by reason of this natural uncleanness) he could not cease to sin, till he should cease to be in this world. Thus God himself argues for his own compassions and sparing mercies to the renewed world after the flood: for whereas he had said (Gen. 6. 5.) *The imagination of man's heart is evil continually, and therefore I will destroy man whom I have created, from the face of the earth.* Yet at the 8th chap. ver. 21. the Lord resolves thus, *I will not again smite the earth any more, and every living thing, as I have done. Why? For the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth: As if he had said, Though I drown'd the world with water, yet they are not washed from their uncleanness, I see water will not fetch out sin, nor my judgments make man holy: I must always destroy if I should destroy it often as men do wickedly, therefore I will not smite the earth in this sort any more.* (Thus Job might move the Lord to forbear afflicting him, because he could not (being born in sin) forbear to sin, though in this he aggravates his own sinfulness. We may beseech the Lord to spare us when we act sin, because our natures are sinful: but we unto those that go about either to palliate or extenuate their acts of sin, by the sinfulness of their natures.

JOB Chap. 14. Ver. 5, 6.

Setting his days are determined, the number of his months are with thee, thou hast appointed him his bounds that he cannot passe.

Turn from him that he may rest; till he shall accomplish as an hireling his day.

JOB having pleaded for pity upon consideration of the weaknesse and frailty of man, upon the consideration of the shortnesse of his life, and sinfulness of his nature, proceeds here to another argument from a double consideration about death.

First, Because death hath a set and a fixed time at which it will come, and will not tarry, in the 5th and 6th verses.

Secondly, Because there is no returning from death? when death hath got us into its hand, it holdeth us fast and keepeth us sure enough. This he illustrates two ways,

By a dissimilitude, in the 7, 8, 9, 10 verses. *There is hope of a tree if it be cut down, that it will sprout again, &c.* but it is not so with man: *Man death and wasteth away, Man groweth up the Ghost, and where is he?* This is a dissimilitude.

2. He illustrateth it by a similitude, vers. 11, 12. *As the waters fail from the sea, and the flood decayeth and dryeth up, so man lieth down and riseth not.* By these two are set forth the prevailing strength of death. When once we are under the power of the grave, there is no release nor fetching us back by any created strength.

In these two verses, the 5th and 6th Job openeth his first argument; that there is a set time; and not onely a setting, but a time irrevocable, a time so set that there can be no unsettling of it. *The number of his months are with thee, thou hast set him his bounds, which he cannot passe.*

His days are determined.

The Argument stands thus, *He should be mercifull and gently dealt with in this life, who's life is set out by certain bounds and limits, beyond which he*

cannot passe, and from which he cannot return.

But thus it is with poor man, there is a set period of his life, and as he cannot get beyond it, so he cannot come back from it.

Therefore turn away and let me have some rest. As if he had said, Besides, that this life is full of evil (as was shewed before) death the greatest of natural evils is at hand, which suddenly takes us away, throweth us into the grave, hides us there without possibility of returning to such a life as we here enjoy. Job hath used this argument before: neither should it seem strange that he now repeats and modestly objects it unto God to move pity, and stir the bowels of his compassion towards him, The Psalmist, whether David or some other pen-man, argues thus (Psal. 89. 48) Remember Lord how short my time is, wherefore hast thou made all men in vain? What man is he that liveth and shall not see death, and shall he deliver his soul from the power of the grave? He urgeth the Lord to grant some ease, some breathing, some respite and relaxation in this life, because death cannot be far off, from which there is no rescue, no returning.

מְדַבֵּר מוֹדֵעַ
gita vit qua-
dam alacri-
tate, etiam
sedulo & so-
licite minu-
tissima quae-
sitavit ordi-
navit, statuit
decrevit.

וְיִפְתָּח
Consumet po-
pulum, &
precisus am-
putatisq; in-
utilibus im-
piis, abbrevi-
abit populum
& ad minu-
endum jus-
torum reli-
quias, redi-
get Pined.

The word which we translate *determined*, signifies properly to dig, and by a Metaphor to make an exact and curious search, or by searching thoughts to dig down into the depth of a business, and then to settle it. Hence it is translated *diligent*, (Prov. 10. 4.) The hand of the diligent maketh rich, properly the hand of the digger makes rich. And the word imports not only digging in the ground for ordinary commodities, as for stones, or coals, but digging for gold and silver, for the most precious metals or minerals: how diligent are men when they dig for such treasure and for riches? such is the diligent hand which maketh rich. Now because when we make any serious determination upon any matter before us, we first search or dig into the bottom of it: Therefore the word is translated here to *determine*. In Job 19. 23. The Lord and of hosts hath made a consumption, even determined in the midst of all the land. God makes many consumptions, he lays whole countries and kingdoms waste; but his are not consumptions at a venture; or by hap hazard, accidental consumptions, but consumptions determined, that is, the Lord sets down directly who and how many, where and when, what persons, what places, what estates and things shall be consumed. God makes a determined consumption in the greatest confusions and hurry of the nations. When we

ges of infancy, of childhood, of youth, of full age, and old age, but the months and days of our lives, yea, his knowledge reacheth unto (which to us are almost unsearchable) hours, minutes and moments, even these are measured, numbered, and up by the infinite foreknowledge of the eternal God.

solum fit Secondly observe,

mentio ad di- The days and months of mans life are set and fixed.

stinam de

singularibus

Des. vocisiam

expresmen-

dam. Bold.

There is a resolve passed upon every man, our times are now to be disposed of: God hath past the account of time from all eternity. As to every thing there is a season (Eccl. 3:1) to every person: and this is true not only of single persons, but even of whole generations, yea of all the generations of mankinde (Ae. 17. 26.) He hath made of one blood, all nations of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed.

God hath determined not only how long man shall live, but how long the world shall live: he said of mankinde before the flood, his days shall be an 120 years, Gen. 6. 3. He told Abraham, his seed should be a stranger four hundred years. He told the Jews their captivity should continue seventy years in literal Babylon. And he hath told us (if we could read the figures) how many years the Church of the Gospel should grow under mystical Babylon. All things and persons on earth are dated in heaven. Whatsoever man is Lord of, I am sure he is not Lord of time: he cannot dispose of one minute for himself or others. We live not at our own pleasure, nor at the pleasure of any creature, God keeps reckoning for us. The very hairs of our head are numbered, then surely the days of our lives are numbered. The hairs of the head are the meanest parts, indeed but an excrement of man, and there are such multitudes, such numbers of hair upon the head, that it is a wonder they should be numbered, or any account kept of them: yet to shew the providence of God extending to the least things, it extends to the numbering of hairs and days.

Now if God hath determined the days of mans life, then enquire not of the stars or of star-gazers for the number of them. When David would know the number of his days, he doth not resort to Astrologers, but to God: Lord teach me to number my days, he puts that request to God: nor did he put it to God as enquiring for the precise number of his days, (about this we must not be curious, as to know whether we shall live 20. or 30.

whether

new law upon the point, God hath once settled it, and it is settled for ever. When *Abishai* went to the cave where *Saul* was, and asked *David* leave to kill him: *I will smite him* (saith he) *the first time, and I will not smite him the second time: I will make sure work at a blow* (*1 Sam. 26. 8.*) Such is the intendment of the particle *once* in that Law. The Lord hath appointed the bounds of life *once*, and the bounds of death *once*: He will not appoint them a second time: *Thou hast set him his bounds which he cannot passe.*

There are two opinions about the bound of mans life, or what this bound is. First, some place it in natural causes, as in the temperment and constitution of the body. There is a truth in that, but we must not rest there: Natural causes are somewhat, and men who live long are usually of a lasting complexion and constitution. But secondly, the true bounds are set by God. *The will of God is the limit of mans life*, for though there be a satableness in the natural temper of men to such or such a term of life, yet God often acts beside and crosseth that; some healthy men die young, and some crazy men live till they are old. The bounds may be passed which our natural complexion sets, the bounds cannot be passed which the providence and will of God sets. That man dies at such a time, may be a contingency in reference to second causes, but let him die when he will, it is necessary in regard of the first cause. *He cannot passe.*

The word *passe*, is proper to laws and bounds; bounds are set on purpose to keep us from passing beyond them. As all good laws are bounds which we should not passe, so transgression which is the breach of some law, signifies a passing over or beyond the law. God hath set man a bound of a law, how long he shall live, as well as a law in what manner he shall live. The former bound is passed by man every day, the later was never passed by any man. We often passe the bounds of the mortal law of God, but we cannot passe the bounds of the eternal decree of God.

Hence Observe,

That the days of man are determined by God; so man cannot live a day beyond that determination.

Friends cannot protract, enemies cannot shorten the life of man one moment. How often did the Jews desire the death of

Christ

Impossibile est hominem diutius vel minus vivere quam divina dispositio habet, licet hunc hominem nunc primo more contingens, si in se consideretur.
 Again.
by Verbum praterendi recte quadrat legi.

Christ, but they could not accomplish it, till his hour was come. And when his hour was come, he would not pass it. What was said of Christ is true of every man, he lives not after he does before his hour is come. Man is apt to think himself Master of his own life, if not to continue it, yet to end it. And we have a saying, (which some count a fable and a wise one) He that cares not for his own life, is master of another's mans life: But both speak false Doctrine, and are confuted by *Jobs* Divinity. What God speaks of that Law, which is the rule of our lives in *Grace*, (*Hebrews 5. 12*) *Heaven and Earth pass, and we yet shall remain, and remain for ever, till all be fulfilled.* The same may we speak of this Law, which is the limit of our lives in *Nature*; one jot or tittle of this Law shall not pass unfulfilled, and when once this Law is fulfilled, the life of man cannot pass on nor on tittle further.

Some Sermons seem to speak against this Doctrine of the man determination of mans dayes by the Decree of God. I shall briefly clear them.

First, When *Hezekiah* was sick, and (as he thought) dying, did not God send him a Message by the Prophet *Isaiah* (*Isaiah 38. 5*) *I am dead, and will be dead, and thou shalt say, I have seen the Lord, the God of David thy Father, hec. I will heal thee, and add unto thy days fifteen years.* I will add to thy life fifteen years. It fifteen years were added, then surely his dayes were not determined: Either God had not appointed him a set time, or he changed his mind, and came to a new appointment: And *Hezekiah* did either miss the word which God once spake, or he might have fallen short of them.

The fifteen years added to *Hezekiah*'s life, were added to *Hezekiah*'s date, not to Gods. *Hezekiah* looked upon himself as a dead man; He was sick, and sick to death in his own opinion, possibly also, in the opinion of all his servants and Physicians; yet he, and they too were deceived; God had determined him a longer time, and tells him he had. *I will add to thy life fifteen years.* This addition doth not imply any alteration in the purpose of God, as if having once decreed that *Hezekiah* should live but forty years, he afterwards (upon his Prayer) granted, that he should live fifty five: For as he determined *Hezekiah* should be sick unto Death, and that he should receive Sentence of Death in

himself, to be determined also, that *Hezekiah* should recover and owe live that dangerous sickness fifteen years.

Secondly, That of the Preacher may be objected (Eccl. 1. 10, 11) *Be not righteous overmuch, neither make thy self wise, why shouldst thou destroy thy self? Be not over much wise, neither be thou foolish; why shouldst thou die before thy time?* Answer, I answer, that the Preacher is not here speaking of a man that is righteous, but of a man that is over-righteous, and is over-wise, and is over-foolish, and is over-dying before his time.

He that dies before his time, dies not before the time which God hath determined. An unreasonable death to man doth not prevent Gods season. To clear which we must distinguish about death, which is twofold: first, natural, secondly, violent. A man that dieth a violent death, is said to die before his time, because he dieth before that time which he might have reached according to the course of nature: sin cuts man off before nature cuts him off, but such God cuts him off for his sin. Thus many die before their time; and, except in that sense, no man dieth before his time. That, such was the meaning of *Stewards*, is plain in the text, when he saith, *be not wicked over much*. Which (by the way) note not simply that there is a mean in wickedness, or that the Preacher would persuade men only to temper in wickedness; he wicked so far but no further: as wickedness is too much or more then enough. Every man is fitting in an extremum. But when he saith be not over much wicked, he intends only this much, give not thy self up to wickedness, lest the magistrate who beareth the sword in vain, shall come to an account, and send thee to the grave by the hand of justice, before old age or sickness send thee thither. The Hebrew is, *why shouldst thou die in a time not thine?* that is, before thine old age, for this is mans proper time of decay. Again, The proper time of mans dying is, when he is ready for death. As when a Steward is ready to make his account, that is his best time to give up his Stewardship; and therefore, be not wicked over much, lest God take thee away when thy account are altogether unready, that's no time for thee to die in. There is a time of him that dieth, and a time of death, the time of death is when ever a man dieth, but the time of him that dieth is only then, when he is fit to die.

Thirdly, Some may object the promise which is made to the fifth commandment, *Honour thy father and mother that thy days*

may be long in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee (Exod. 20. 12.) which carries this threat in it; if thou dishonour thy father and mother, they daies shall be shortened. Whence it may be argued, that the shortning or lengthning of mans daies depends upon his own acting, upon his obedience or disobedience, not upon the sentence and decree of God: for if a mans life cannot be lengthned beyond its set time, where lieth the motive or strength of this argument?

Answer, The promise of lengthning, and implicit threat of shortning our daies, doth not enforce a mutability in the appointment of God about the date of our daies; but only holds forth a token or an evidence who they are to whom God hath appointed many daies. Such as are obedient to parents, may with warrant look upon themselves as designed by God to long life: and they who are rebellious against their parents, have a warning against themselves, that God hath allotted them but a short life, or will cut them off shortly by death. For (as Solomon speaks) *The Ravens of the vallies shall pluck out the eyes of such and eat them;* that is, they shall die ignominiously and their carcases shall become meat for the fowls of the air. Out obedience or disobedience to the revealed will of God, doth not make any change of, but fulfill and draws out the secret will of God.

Fourthly, Saith not David (Psal. 93. 23.) that, *The bloud-thirsty and deceitful man shall not live out half his daies*: And again, (Psal. 86. 43.) *The daies of our youth hast thou shortened*. If our daies may be halved and shortened, then our daies are not unalterably bounded and determined.

Answer, There is a twofold limit of mans daies; there is a general limit, and there is a special or personal limit. The general limit, is threescore and ten or fourscore years (Psal. 90. 10.) (Those few exceptions which some have made by exceeding this limit, do not weaken this general rule.) But besides this general, there is a particular limit upon every person. The limit of one may be threescore years, when another is limited to forty, a third to twenty, a fourth to five, and a fifth to four. These are special limits upon special men; now when the Psalmist saith, that a *deceitful man shall not live out half his daies*, the

meaning of it, he shall not live out half the dayes of mans generallimit, as suppose a bloody man be cut off at thirty, he hath not lived out half Seventy or Eighty Years, which are the common bounds of Life prescribed to Mankind beyond which they cannot pass. But this man lives out all the dayes of his special limit, nor all the dayes which were determined for his Portion in the Land of the Living. Thus the bloodiest and most deceitful Wretch that ever was in the World lives out all his dayes. Our dayes are as many as God appoints in special and no more, whensoever or in what way soever we are brought to the Period of our dayes.

From the whole Context observe by way of Corollary.

First, *The Decrees of God are absolute and irrevocable.*

As we cannot add one Cubit to our Stature, so not one hour to our dayes. And such as the Statute or Decree of God is concerning the number of dayes which every Person shall pass in this Temporal life, such also is the Decree of God concerning the number of those Persons who shall inherit Eternal Life. The dayes of Mortality are determined for every Person, how many they shall be. And it is determined who and how many Persons shall enjoy a blessed Eternity.

Secondly, *Observe*

The absoluteness and irrevocability of Gods Decrees concerning the number of our dayes, doth not disengage us from the use of means, and second helps for the continuance and lengthning of our dayes.

Man must not say, God hath decreed how long I shall live, therefore I need not take any care of my life, this were to resist the Command of God, while we think we submit to his Decree. Whereas indeed all the Commands of God are subordinate and Ministerial to the fulfilling of his Decrees. Will any man say, God hath determined my dayes, which I cannot pass, therefore when I am hungry I will not eat, when I am sick I will not take Physick nor use Medicines. The Decree of God is so far from calling us off from, that it obligeth us to the use of all due means for our Preservation. When Satan tempted Christ to throw himself down from the Pinnacle of the Temple, he answers, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God. While we neglect our selves we tempt God. We must not throw away our lives, because God keeps them. And thus assurance of his life, by a special promise,

*Hominum
excusationes
sunt Dei
tentationes.*

yet when Esau came out against him with four hundred men, he doth not say, *Lord, thou hast undertaken for my protection* What need I trouble myself? I will sit down under the Branch of thy promise and providence, which thou hast displayed over me, for Esau rage and threaten, his kind Adverser and lead all his force against me, if he will, what care I? I fear him not, he must break through the truth of God before he breaks in upon me; the Word of God must fall before I fall: I am under the charge of Heaven. Doth Jacob make this use of the Promise? No, he falls a praying like a Saint, and he falls a providing for his Defence like a Souldier (Gen. 32.) Had not David a sure word from God, that he should live, to wear the Crown of Israel and Judah? Yea, he had not only a word but a sign, he was anointed by Samuel, which Ceremony assured him he should be King, yet how doth he improve all Aids and Friends to save his life? He doth not say, *Samuel hath told me from the Lord, that I shall be King, therefore I will not stir a stick from Saul, let him do his worst*: No, he withdraws from Court, and gathers an Army, he defends himself by power, he doth not stand to the naked defence of the Promise. And if it be our duty to labour after the preservation of a Temporal life, though God hath decreed the bounds of it, then much more should we do thus in reference to Spiritual and Eternal life. Some will say, God hath made a Decree which cannot pass, who shall be saved and who damned, therefore what need we use the means of Salvation? What need we avoid the ways of damnation? But remember, the same word commands us to depart from iniquity, which saith, *The foundation of God standeth sure, and he knoweth who are his*. 'Tis as much our duty to give all diligence to make our Calling and Election sure, as it is to believe that the Election and Calling of God are sure.

Thirdly, Observe,

If our dayes are determined by God, then we should not be afraid (when we have a due call) of shortening our dayes, by running hazards and hard adventures for God.

Our life is in Gods hand, he hath set the bounds, which no mans malice can shorten, nor any cowardise of our own lengthen. As none could bring us into the World, so none can thrust us out, till the time appointed. Let not Persecutors take away the Truth from us, which God hath given us to believe, for they cannot take away a day from us, which God hath given us to live.

This is an excellent ground of courage, but no ground of carelessness: Were we persuaded of this truth, it would ease us of much inordinate fear, though it should not at all abate our orderly care of this present life. Paul was in death often, but he died not once, till his day came. Paul was in the Lion's mouth, but the Lion could not eat him, because he was not then meat for death.

Lastly, God is most exact to his own numbers.

As he is exact concerning duties by him commanded to require them, so he is exact concerning times by him appointed, that we may enjoy them. *My Spirit* (saith the Lord) *shall not always strive with man, his days shall be an hundred and twenty years* (Gen. 6. 3.) The Flood came not upon the old world an hour before this number of years was run out, and the old world could not passe that number of years an hour, the deluge comes, and all are drowned. The Lord foretold Abraham (as wastoneth before) Gen. 15. 13. *Thy seed shall be a stranger in a land which is not theirs, they shall serve them and they shall afflict them four hundred years* (beginning the account at the birth of Isaac.) The fulfilling of which prophesie is reported in the holy story (Exod. 32. 46.) *It came to passe at the end of the four hundred and thirty years* (beginning the account from the day in which the promise was made to Abraham) *the self same day is came to passe that all the host of the Lord went out of the Land of Egypt.* God did not only not fail them a day, but he did not fail them a piece of a day, for they came out in the night, because the four hundred and thirty years were expired that night, and when the time was out, though it were night, God would not stay till morning or break of day: he would rather provide them a Torch, an extraordinary night-light (then stay for day-light) that so his word might be fulfilled in its perfect season. The *Babylonish* captivity continued seventy years and no longer. And some give that for the reason why *Belshazzar* was slain in the night because then the years of that captivity were expired. The collation of times proves it, that *Daniels weeks* were fulfilled to a day at the death of Christ. God the great disposer of time and number of days, hath also calculated all the times of the Churches troubles and deliverances, in the book of the *Revelation*: and there the dayes of *Babylon* are determined, and her bounds are set which she shall not passe. We have a saying, much like our selves,

The Elect must die if God should turn away from them; his favourable presence holds their souls in life; and will hold both their souls and Bodies together in joy for ever. As the rising of the Sun is the cause of the Day, and when the Sun departs and turns away, Darknesse covers the Face of the Earth: so the presence of God is the support of our lives, and when God departs and turns away, Death covers our Faces in the Earth.

Secondly, 'Tis true, Death is a Rest. Death is not only like Sleep; the Parenthesis of our Labours, but the full stop and period of our Labours: There's no work in the Grave.

Thirdly, 'Tis a truth that, *The Toils, Troubles, and evils of this life make Death desirable.* 'Tis best to desire to die, that we may enjoy Christ and God, who are the chiefest good, yet the fear or feeling of evil cause most to desire Death. It is some mercy to die before times of Judgment, and it is a mercy to die in times of Judgment: (Rev. 14. 13.) *I heard a Voice from Heaven saying to me, write, Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord, from henceforth: they shall rest from their labours.* Some lay the Emphasis upon those words from henceforth, as if it was Prophecy of Troubles and Persecutions to come upon the Church of God. Now, the Spirit saith, *Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord, from henceforth:* As if he had said, *The time I am Prophecying of, will be so full of labour and trouble, that even they who live in the Lord, may account it their blessedness to die in the Lord, as well as it is their blessedness to die at any time in the Lord.*

But I take this Exposition. The words hold not rather a Deprecation of, then a Prayer for Death; take it thus: *For having said to God, at the 11. Verse, While thou open thy eyes upon such a man, I have interceded God to turn from him.* As if he had said, *Be not so strict in marking what I am, nor so severe in judging me, as thou speakest after the manner of men, who turn away from those whom they intend to spare; if a Father would not correct his Child who hath offended him, he turns away, that he may avoid the Temptation, or Provocation of doing it.* Thus *for* intreats the favour of God, or the forbearance of his Anger, *turn away from me, let me be quiet a while; let me have some peaceable days in the World; before I depart the world.*

Job intends here a Period, not a pause of his labours.

Hence Observe,

First, *The life of man is a labourious life.*

He must accomplish his dayes as a Hireling: He is a Labourer, not a Loiterer. Sin brought pain into our Labour, but the duty of Labour was before Sin.

Secondly Note,

We have but a day of Labour.

A Hireling doth not think much of it, it is but a day, and if some have a longer day then others, yet still 'tis but a day: This day will end, and it will be as if it had never began, we shall forget all our sorrows. A woman in Travel hath great sorrow, but when the work is over, she forgets all her sorrow, for joy that a man is born into the World: When we come to the wished accomplishment of our Labours, we shall forget that we were in labour. As our Labours are little regarded by the World here, so we shall as little remember them our selves hereafter, we shall lay them all under our Pillows, when we go to the Grave, and talk no more of them.

Thirdly Note,

This life must be accounted for; or, there is a reckoning to come about this life.

Every man accomplisheth as a Hireling his day, a Hireling hath his work viewed before his Wages are paid: Every man must give an account of himself to God. Evil workers shall be paid with Death: They who do good shall receive the Free gift of Eternal life: Our labour shall not be in vain, either in the Lord or out of the Lord: all that we do shall be considered: Wicked men shall have their pay for what they have done, and the Saints shall receive their reward. *Their works shall follow them.* They shall not receive Wages for their Work, but they shall receive benefit by their work, worth more then their Work Ten Thousand times told: Though Saints are not mercenary (they work, not as Hirelings for Pay) yet in the issue they shall have better then Pay for all their Works. They shall receive more for the least work, then the best works can deserve. A Cup of cold Water shall have a reward, Rivers of Oyl have no Merit. It were not worth while to be as an Hireling, or to set our Hand to the Noblest Works among men, if all the return were to come through the Hands of Men: But as whatsoever we

do in this World is in the sight of God, so it is also in the Memory of God. For, *He is not unrighteous to forget our work and labour of Love* (Heb. 6. 10.) Both the Labour of our Callings, and the Labour of our Sufferings, shall have a full reward.

JOB Chap. 14. Ver. 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12.

For there is hope of a Tree if it be cut down, that it will sprout again, and that the tender Branch thereof will not cease.

Though the Root thereof wax old in the Earth, and the Stock thereof die in the Ground;

Yet through the scent of Water is well bud, and being fresh Boughs like a Plant.

But man dieth and wasteth away, yea, a man giveth up the Ghost, and where is he?

As the Waters fail from the Sea, and the Flood decayeth and drieth up:

So man lieth down and riseth not, till the Heavens be no more, they shall not awake, nor be raised out of their Sleep.

IN these six Verses, Job amplifies and illustrates his former assertion, that, *The days of man are determined, and the number of his months, which he cannot pass: He doth this, 1. By a Dissimilitude. 2. By a Similitude.*

The Dissimilitude, is laid down in the 7, 8, 9, 10. verses. We have the Explanation, in the 7, 8, and 9th verses, and the Application of it, at the 10th. *There is hope of a Tree if it be cut down, &c.* Ver. 7, *But man dieth and wasteth away, yea man giveth up the Ghost, and where is he?* Ver. 10.

The Similitude is contained in the 11th and 12th verses. *As the Waters fail from the Sea, &c.* *So man lieth down and riseth not, till the Heavens be no more.*

and fully manifest the wisdom of God. As a Tree is cut down, and its branches are scattered, so the Christian's body is dissolved, and his soul is separated from it. The Scripture is full of instances of this kind. The cutting down of a Tree is a common thing, and the growth of a Tree is a common thing. There is an Argument from Nature, a Tree may die, and yet grow; there is an Argument from Nature. The Resurrection of the dead is a Miracle of God, and yet our Bodies may grow in an Argument about it. We may see a Resurrection in the annual reviving of a Tree, that Tree in the Winter casts its leaves, and looks as dead, but when the Sun returns, and with it the heat, the Tree reviveth; every Spring is as a Resurrection from death. There is much in this Interpretation, but to make out such an Argument by the growth of the woods, or such an Instance from the life of a Tree, is to stretch it at all possible. And therefore I leave it to the Reader's own Judgment.

Secondly, Others interpret the becoming the condition of man (as to this point) in respect to that of a Tree. For first, the boughs of a Tree may be lost, yet the body of it quite cut down; and yet it feels no pain, the Tree is not grieved, how much less can you hew, cut, and mangle it: But when God takes his An either to the boughs of man by Sickness, Diseases, and outward Afflictions, or to his Body by death, man feels pain. Every Stroke puts him to smart. Secondly, As the Tree is cut and cut down, without pain, so it will sprout up again, and renew, which man doth not. Hence Note,

That a man in affliction is like a Tree, whose boughs are cut down, yet whose body is not cut down, and yet it feels no pain. How long will the thoughts of man descend when he is laid low? He would even change states, or (as you say) run, rather than (long and dumb) lie here in hope of a Tree, but I am (as to a Lampost) perhaps.

Thirdly, The Words carry an Argument to move the Lord to spare, or not to cut him down, though he had lost all of his Leaves and Fruit (his substance being first taken by Robbery, though he had lost off his Boughs and Branches (his Children being swept away by Death) yet he desires that he would not press upon his Person, also, and cut him quite down, because then

*Solis occide- then he should be lost for ever out of this World. He was not
re & redie like a Tree, which when cut down shoots forth at the Root a-
possunt. gain. We find such Arguments used by Orators and Poets to
No bis cum let forth the Vanity of man beyond that of other Creatures. The
semel cum Sun sets (saith one of them) and rises again. But when made
brevis lux. sun goeth down, it rises no more; tis always night with man when
Nox est per- this night comes. The Snow dissolves (saith another) and then the
petua una Fields are sowed with Grass; and the Trees with Leaves, but nei-
dormienda ther the Honour, nor the Eloquence, nor the Power of man can restore
Catullus. him to a Spring after the Winter of his Death.*

*Diffagere There is hope of a Tree if cut down, that it will sprout again.
nives, rede- The word which we translate to sprout, signifieth to change,
unt jam gra- and renew to another, or a better State. Job makes use of it,
mina campis at the 14th. Verse of this Chapter, I will wait till my change, or
arboribusque my sprouting come. Though he was hopeless of a change from
coma, &c. death to this life, yet he was assured of a happy change in death,
Non Tor- yea of a change from Death to Eternal life.*

*quate genus But it may be doubted, how a Tree if cut down sprouts again.
non re facun- Tis true, when only the Boughs are lopt off, it sprouts presently,
dia non re, but if the body of a Tree be cut down, Will it grow again? That
vestitus pic- seems to be the sense of Job.*

*Hor. li. I answer.
4. Car. Od. The bodies of some Trees (as for instance the Willow) being
7 cut down and set into the ground, are every where observed to
In proprio grow, and their tender branch doth not cease. Some interpret
mutabitur, Job not of Trees in general, but of this or some other particular
instaurabi- sort of Trees.*

*sur, innova- Again, Some Trees though the body which is cut off will not
tur. grow, yet the Root which remains will grow up into a new
a Quarn- body. Such a Tree is the a Laurel, whose description given by
dam arbo- Plin in his natural History, doth well agree with this Discourse
rum radix of Job. And because the Heathen did not believe a Resurrection,
vivacior su- therefore they made those Trees to be Symbols and Emblems
perficie ut of Death, which being once cut down, grow no more: It is ob-
lauri, isaque served that the Romans were wont to place a b Cypress-Tree at
cum truncu the Threshold of the House of Death, because the Cypress being
inarvis, re- cut down never springs any more.*

*scissa etiam Læus fructificat. Phil. Nat. Hist. b Romanis moris fuit ut potissimum cypressus qua
excisa renasci non solet in vestibulo mortis poneretur. Ser. in Vir. l. 4. Pl. l. 16. r. 32.*

Lastly,

Lastly, Many Trees (their Roots remaining in the Earth) will grow after cutting, though not in a full Body, yet in Sprouts, their tender Branches will not cease, or as some render the Hebrew, *These suckers will not leave*: We often see young Sips rise at the Root, when the Tree itself is cut down. And this I conceive to be the meaning of Job, who calls such Shoots *Suckers*, because they live upon the Root, like little Children at their Mothers breast. Job carries on the Explication yet further.

Vers. 8. *Though the Root thereof was old in the Earth, and the Stock thereof die in the ground.*

In which words he puts a supposition of greater improbability. 'Tis much that a Tree cut down should grow, much more if the root was old, and the Stock die in the ground. It shewed not only the Improbability but Impossibility (in Nature) that Sarah should have a Son when she was waxen old, and her Womb (as the Apostle speaks, *Rom. 4.*) was dead. And will the dead Root of a Tree grow naturally again? I conceive this dying of the Root is only the decaying of the Root, or that he intends only a partial not a total Death: Christ tells us (*Job 12. 24.*) *That except a corn of Wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone, (that is, it doth not increase or bring forth more corn) but if it die it bringeth forth much fruit.* The death of corn in the ground is not a total death, but only a corruption or alteration of it, for if the Seminal life and Vertue of it be quite Extinguished or drawn out, it could not yield either Blade or Ear without a miracle; yet because that alteration of it is a kind of death, therefore it is used as an Illustration of Christs rising, and also of contrition ours, (by Paul, *1 Cor. 15.*) from a total Death. Now as according to the course which God hath set in Nature, a Corn of *Sarvis* Mo-Wheat (in this sense) dying, bringeth forth fruit; so according to the course of Nature, the root of a tree (in this sense) dying or dead buds and brings forth Boughs, as it follows in the next Verse.

Vers. 9. *For though the scent of Water, shall pass, and bring forth aqua odorem.*

It is an elegant Metaphor, as if a tree smelt the water as soon as it came near: And is noted thus much: That the tree upon the first soaking in, or springing up of the Water, is refreshed and made fruitful. When the three Children were cut into the fiery pices converted to Ashes, Job said, *I husk of Job had now passed upon them.* (*Dan. 3. 27.*)

271) that is, their garments were not so much as touched or
tinged with fire. The fire had not made the least impression up-
on them. So his soul, when Jesus was bound, he broke the
Cords; even as the fire breaks in the fire (Job 1:16). A long
will endure the fire long; but upon the first approach of fire a
thread is burnt under. The Prophet saith of Christ, *The Spirit*
of the Lord shall rest upon him, and shall make him of quick under-
standing in the fear of the Lord. (Isa 11:3.) the Hebrew is, *I shall*
make him quick in the fear of the Lord; or, *he shall smell in the fear*
of the Lord. Smelling is not for understanding; and (because
the smell is a very quick sense) doth notes quickness or
Understanding, as we under-stand; *he shall be quick of understanding;*
he shall understand the deepest Mysteries, and most difficult cases
as speedily, as the most exquisite smell takes a scent. So then, when
Job saith, *by the scent or smell of water it will bud it notes quick*
growing. (Job 41:18) he saith, *bringing forth of a harvest of Doctrine* (as
the Original imports); whereas man will not grow again by an
application of the means.

A Tree cut down springs again: But how? *Through the scent of*
Water.

Here, Note, on this point to shew you that (as
the Tree will grow) but it must have at least a smell of Water.
Secondly Observe, that it is not only the scent of Water, but the

Natural effects have their natural causes.

Through the scent of Water it will grow. Water is as proper
to preserve or draw out the life of Plants, as Bread is to preserve
the life of Man.

Thirdly Observe, that upon the presence of the cause the effect follows presently.

Through the scent of water it will grow, give it Water, and you
shall soon perceive a growth. How doth this shameless Tree
grow, sends out both leaves and fruit through the scent of water.
Our man hath spiritual Water, the Rain of holy Doctrine from
Heaven, he hath not only the scent of Water, but abundance of
Water falling upon him, yet how little doth he grow! yea, how
many are there that grow not at all? Many souls are continually
dying, and perishing, and Rain is upon them, and like a Tree
that is cut down, yet it is not growing again. One who grows though upon them;
that is, he who is the cause of the growth, and he who gives the
means?

קצור proprie
messis ut pal-
mites qui
sunt rami
vitium vo-
cantur.
קצור

Psal. 80. 12.

means. Trees answer all natural causes with suitable effects, when the Sun turneth about, they put on their Green suits, they send out their Leaves, their Blossoms and their Fruits : The Sun of Righteousness shines, the warm Beams of the Gospel-light dart upon thousands of Souls, who continue in a Winter of Ignorance and Unbelief, yielding neither the pleasure of Leaves, nor the profit of Fruit. And though some bring forth Leaves, yet how few bring forth Fruit, especially Fruit meet for Repentance from dead works, or the hopes of Eternal life ? We see many Spiritual helps, but how rare are Spiritual effects ; The Grains and Trees of the Earth will condemn those who make no growth in Grace, though they have been often watered with the word of Grace.

Verse 10. *But man dieth and wasteth away, yea, man giveth up the Ghost, and where is he ?*

The Hebrew is, *strong and powerful man dieth* ; let him be as strong as he will, die he must, waste, and give up the Ghost : Some observe an inversion of natural order in the words, For man goes down the Grave by these steps. He first wastes, secondly, give up the Ghost, and then dies. The Spirit of God doth not alwayes exactly attend (*prius & posterius*) first or last, according to the order of Nature : Neither is there any redundancy in this plenty of words. There is not one Title in Scripture but hath its Use and Elegancy, and because the Spirit of God would shew the certainty of this thing, he heaps many words together into one asseveration, man wastes, dieth, and giveth up the Ghost, he is all things and suffers all things, which speak Mortality.

ver potens & clarus. Sunt qui volunt hic esse bifferon proteron. Ego hanc geminationem ad copiam lingue sancte facere puto. Mere.

We render, *yea, man giveth up the Ghost*, as if that implied somewhat more then the former two : The particle, *yea*, (in the Hebrew) heightens the sense, man wasteth, dieth, yea, he giveth up the Ghost.

Some understand wasting and dying, but as Preparatories or Antecedents to giving up the Ghost : Man decays and wastes, yea, he dieth every day, but he doth not give up the Ghost every day, that's the last Act. Paul speaking of his outward troubles and persecutions saith, *I die daily*, and in another place, *I have been in deaths often* : Natural death steals upon us part after part, it seizeth now upon the Eyes and makes them dim, then

H h h h

upon

upon the Ears and makes them Deaf, and so takes in now this Member, and anon that, till it conquer the whole man. Death hath its Forerunners and Harbingers, Sickneses and Diseases; A sick diseased man hath many Symptoms of Death upon him before he gives up the Ghost: When he gives up that all is given up, Death enters his Fort, and takes full possession of him.

And where is he?

*Ubi est?
Nullibi, ut
inde redire
possit ad ean-
dem vi-
tam quam
semel reli-
quit. Non
est, quia non
est in vivis.
Drus.*

The Question seems to carry a Negation in it, *man is no where*. He is not transplanted as Trees sometimes are, and set in another ground. But is that goodly thing, *man*, quite gone, and vanished to a nothing when he dieth? That which is no where is nothing. There must be some place for every thing: Every entity must have its *ubi*, every *what is*, *where*: Therefore to say *man is no where*, is to say *man is nothing*, or to assent to a total Mortality both of Soul and Body: We must therefore restrain *where is he*? To where is he in the World? Look for him in the Country, in the City, at Home or Abroad, he is not to be had, *man gives up the Ghost*, and where is he?

I might here give Observations about the Mortality of *Man*, but having done it lately, *ver. 1, 2*. I will not do it again. Note First, In general.

Man is a wasting, dying Creature.

He hath received a life which he must shortly render and repay.

Secondly, *When man dieth, himself and all his glory are gone for ever out of this World.*

Where is he? He and his Riches, he and his Honour, he and his Wisdom, what's become of all his Designs, Devices, Counsels and Thoughts, (*Psal. 146.*) *Trust not in Princes, nor any of the Children of Men, their Breath is in their Nostrils, they die, and then all their Thoughts perish.* The things which they have contrived in or produced out of their Thoughts, those curious Fabricks of the Brain fall and die with them. So much of *Jobs* Dissimilitude.

The Similitude follows in the two next Verses, *Jobs* Discourse moves from the Root and Sprigs of a Tree, to the Stems and Waters.

Verse

Verſe 11. *As the Waters fall from the Sea, and the Flood decayeth and drieth up.*

The Similitude is opened in this 11th. verſe, and applied at the 12th. *So man lyeth down, and riſeth not, &c.*

As the Waters fall from the Sea.

The Particle, *as*, is not in the Original, There we read, *Waters fall from the Sea, and the Floods decay and dry up, Man lyeth down and riſeth not.* This hath led ſome Interpreters to render *Verbum deic* (as the former) by a Diſſimilitude, And they make out the ſenſe thus: *The Sea ebbs and falls from the Shoar, yet it returns again when the Tide turns, and though the Floods decay and dry up through the extremity of heat, and drought, yet the Rain comes and fills them up again, but Man (whoſe life is like Water ſpilt upon the ground, 2 Sam. 14. 14.) is unlike the Sea, or River Water: For when he ebbs he flows not again, when his Moiſture is dried up it returns to him no more.* *notat abire*

But the ſtrain of Interpreters conclude it a Similitude, and I ſhall keep to that, it being alſo very ſutable to the purpoſe of Job.

As the Waters fail from the Sea.

How do the Waters fail from the Sea? The Sea is the great Veſſel or Receptacle of Waters, God calleth the *gatherin together of waters Sea*, (Gen. 1.) And if the Waters which are gathered together fail, what will become of the ſcattered Waters?

There are different Apprehenſions about the making out of a clear meaning.

Argumentum

First thus, As Waters after an Exundation of the Sea, or of ſome great River are (upon the reflux of either) ſeparated from the Channel, and left behind upon the Land, which they overflowed, and becauſe they cannot return (for then they muſt ſe. *impoſſibili, tunc ho-* aſcend, which is impoſſible to Nature) they there utterly dry up and evapourate: So man dieth and returneth no more unto his place; As if he had ſaid, *It is as obſurd and incongruous to ſay, cum affirm that man ſhall return again to this preſent life, when he dieth, aqua ſurſum* as to ſay the Sea water left upon the Land, can conveigh it ſelf back into that ancient Channel. *verſus ad locum ſe reſe-*

Secondly, Others make it an Argument of the Reſurrection, *rat unde de-*
H h h h 2 *As fluxit Sanct*

As if he had said: *Just as the Sea decays and dries up, so man when he dies shall be utterly lost*: One was, is, as true as the other. We have a Proverbial speech, *This is as true as the Sea burns*: We may speak to the same sense, *This is as true as the Sea is empty or dried up*.

Thirdly, This sense is given, as when the Sea fails from the place to which it hath usually flowed; and leaves its former bounds, then the Flouds and Streams adjacent dry up (because they are fed and maintained by the Sea, *Eccles. 1. 7.*) so when natural moisture decays in man (which is the supplement and Oyl of Life) man fails and can no more revive himself, then a River can recover its streams when it is cut off from those secret supplies and Springs which it receiveth from the Seas: Thus the Similitude is applied in the next verse.

Verse 12. *So man lieth down and riseth not, till the Heavens be no more, they shall not awake, nor be raised out of their sleep.*

As if he had said, *Death brings man to bed in the Grave, from whence he riseth not.*

Until the Heavens be no more.

שָׁכַב cubat
in pulvere
sive in sepul-
chro quod
Chaldaei vo-
cant שָׁכַב
unde
שָׁכַב
mortui.

What Heavens? and How are the Heavens no more? There is a threefold Heaven. First, The Airy Heaven, or all that space between the Earth and the Moon, Birds are said to fly abroad in the Heaven, that is, in the Air: Secondly, The Starry Heaven, or the Heaven where the Stars are placed, whether moveable or fixed: Thirdly, The Imperial Heaven, which is called the seat of the Blessed, or, which is more transcendent, The place of the special Presence and Residence of God, when he saith, till the Heavens be no more, means he the Airy, or the Starry, or the Highest Heaven? There is no question but these last Heavens shall continue for ever: Then we must Interpret him of the Starry and Airy Heavens.

Until the Heavens be no more.

Until hath a threefold signification in Scripture.

First, *Until* signifieth a certain Period or Duration: *The Scepter shall not depart from Judah until Shiloh come,* (*Gen. 49. 10.*) So, (*Rom. 11. 25.*) *Blindness in part is hapned unto Israel, until*

the

the fulness of the Gentiles to come in. In these and many other Texts, *Until* notes a determinate time with an exclusion or shutting out of succeeding times, or any stop till the accession and accomplishment of that time.

Secondly, *Until* notes perpetuity; and is put for, *ever*, Psal. 110. *Sit thou at my right hand until I have made thy foes thy foot-stool.* Christ shall not sit at the right Hand of God till that time only, and then be put from his place; For, *Unto the Son he saith, Thy Throne O God, is for ever and ever*, Heb. 1. 8. Yet we must distinguish between the Substance and the Circumstance of Christ's Kingdom, between the thing it self and the form or manner of Administring and dispensing it. In the former sence it is absolutely everlasting, in the latter it shall remain only until the Consummation of all things.

Thirdly, *Until* signifies as in some places, *for ever*, so in others, *never*, 2 Sam. 6. 13. *Michol had no Child until the day of her death*, that is, she never had a Child. An so *until* is most generally interpreted, (*Mat. 1. 25.*) *Then Joseph took unto him his q. d. Sicut Wife, and knew her not, till she had brought forth her first born Son. impossibile* That is, he never knew her, it being (though no Article of Faith, *esset coelestis* yet) a received Opinion, that *Mary* was a Virgin as before, so *corrupta* *ita* *ever* after the Birth of Christ. *hominem*

When it is said here, *man shall not rise till the Heavens be no more*, Some conceive *Job* expressing one impossible thing by another, *surgere*, ther, or implying that it is as impossible to Nature for man *Aquin*, to rise from the Grave of Corruption, as it is for the Heavens to *Elegans* *He-* corrupt. As if he had said, *Man shall never rise by Natural brasimus est power, as the Heavens shall not decay by Natural weaknes.* The *quando unum* Heavens have no Seed of corruption in their Constitution, as not *impossibile* being mixed or made up of different qualities: Hence Heaven in *per aliud in-* Scripture notes perpetuity. To have a Throne *us the dayes of Hea-* *possibile de-* ven, is to have a Throne for ever, (Psal. 89. 29.) And so *Daniel claratur.* speaks in that Prophecie of the Kingdom of Christ, (*Dan. 2. Bold.* 44.) *And in the dayes of those Kings, shall the God of Heaven set Ex coelorum* up a Kingdom, which shall never be destroyed, and the Kingdom *disturnitate* shall never be left to other people: So we render, but whereas *probat quod* we joyn Heaven to God, some of the Learned joyn Heaven to *nunquam* Kingdom, and read it thus, *In the dayes of these Kings shall juxta natu-* God set up the Kingdom of Heaven, or, a Heavenly Kingdom, *ram sit repa-* that is, an everlasting Kingdom, for so he explains it, *which randus homo.* *shall Merc.*

In diebus an- shall not be destroyed, in this sense the Gospel is called the king-
tem regum dome of heaven, because of the perpetuity of it: No sin of those
illorum sus- that profess it, no violence of those who oppose and persecute
citabit Deus it, shall prevail against it or totally abolish it: The Kingdome
cœli Reg- of heaven is (in this sense) above the possibility of earthly vi-
num: Ubi olence. So then, *Mans lying in the Grave till the Heavens be no*
nomen cœli, more, notes continuance in the Grave, even as long as this world
non construi- continues, or, that it shall be night with every man that dies till
tur cum no- the day of Judgment.

mine Deus Here 'tis questioned, Shall the Heavens be no more after the
sed cum no- day of Judgment? Or shall the Heavens corrupt when man is
mine regnum raised from Corruption?

q.d. Juscita- The Vulgar Latins reads. *Till the Heavens be torn and worn*
bit Deus cœ- out. As if the Heavens should be at last like old Garments spent
leste regnum, and Thread-bare, with long use and wearing. But the Heavens
Donec atte- are made of such Stuff as will not waste or decay with age or use:
ratur cœlum When or which way soever they end, they shall end by the will
Vul. ac si of God (by which they began) not by doing service unto
et esset a man.

sen s- There are divers Opinions in the point. First, Some think
cere veteras- that all Creatures shall be restored to that perfection they had
cere. Sed se- before the Fall. Secondly, Others, that the Heavens and Ele-
re omnes su- ments only shall be restored. A third sort say that the Heavens
munut ver- and only two of the Elements, the Air and Earth shall be re-
bum Bithi stored. A fourth say that the old world shall be totally abolish-
pro ditione ed, and a new one Created in the room of it. A fifth Opinion
indeclinabili affirms that the whole world with all the parts and works there-
negativa of, excepting Angels good and bad, the Heaven of the blessed,
Non. Hack- and Hell the place of the damned, shall be totally and finally
vel. Apol. Annihilated; as they were once made out of nothing, so they
of the pow- shall turn to nothing and not return again: And these Interpret
er of God this Scripture, *till the Heavens be no more*, as teaching this utter
in govern- Abolition. To which they add many Texts of Scripture, which
ing the they conceive speaking the same sense, and countenancing their
world. lib. 4. assertion, *Psal. 102. 25, 6. Heb. 1. 10, 11. Isa. 34. 4. Isa. 51. 6.*
c. 13. Sc. 4. *2 Pet. 3. 10. Rev. 6. 14.* In these quoted places we read, *That*
the Elements shall melt with fervent heat, that the Heavens shall
perish and vanish away as the smoak, that they shall be dissolved and
rowled together as a Scroll, that they shall fall as a withered Leaf
or as a dry Figg from the Tree, that they shall pass, yea, pass away
with

with a great noiſe: From all which it is collected and concluded that there ſhall be a total Abolition of the viſible Heavens at the day of the Reſurrection.

Many Arguments are brought to confirm this, chiefly from the uſeleſſneſs of theſe Creatures in that ſtate: When man ſhall have no more need of the Heavens, why ſhould the Heavens be any more? What ſhall man do with the Sun, or the Stars to enlighten him, with Earth or Water, with Beaſts or Fowls to feed or ſerve him, when he ſhall have a Spiritual body, and be raiſed to a ſtate of Incorruption? He ſhall be liſted above the uſe of theſe things, and why ſhould that be, which will be of no uſe?

Again Heaven and Earth ſerve here to ſhew us the inviſible things of God, the Footſteps of his Eternal Power and Godhead are ſeen in the things which are made. But when man ſhall ſee God face to face, when God ſhall fully manifeſt himſelf, What need we any more theſe Glaſſes? He that hath a good Eye cares not for Spectacles: Man who is the nobleſt of viſible Creatures in his preſent condition, ſhall be above the uſe of Creatures in that condition. Hence ſome ſtate the Queſtion thus, That when it is ſaid the Heavens ſhall be no more, The meaning is not, that they ſhall not be at all, but that they ſhall not be for thoſe ends and uſes, to which they now ſerve and were at firſt ſet up.

Laſtly, Many reſolve it thus, that the Heavens ſhall continue according to their Subſtance, not according to their preſent Quality; they ſhall not be Annihilated (ſay they) but bettered. Bold. As if when God brings man to glory in Heaven, he will bring the heavens to glory alſo. And that as the beauty of the creature hath been darkned by the ſin of man, ſo it ſhall receive greater Beauty when the ſin of man is done away. The Apoſtles Language enclines to this (Rom. 8. 21.) The creature it ſelf alſo ſhall be delivered from the bondage of corruption, into the glorious liberty of the ſons of God: So that till the Heavens be no more is according to this poſition, till the Heavens continue no more in their preſent ſtate, but are brought to one more perfect, where the alteration will be ſo great, that it may well be ſaid, they ſhall be no more what they now are. As we ſay of a man who is much changed either in Mind or Body, he is not the ſame man. For (ſay they) As the vile body of man ſhall then be

be fashioned like to the glorious Body of Christ, according to the mighty Power of God, whereby he is able to subdue all things to Himself; So the vilest part of the Frame of the World, much more the Heavens, shall be put into a more excellent fashion than now they are: *The fashion of the World passeth away, but God will put it in a fashion which shall not pass.*

I shall not here interpose my own sense in so great a Variety of Judgment among Learned men, especially, because it is all one to the scope of the Text I am upon, whether we understand it of a total Abolition of these Heavens, or of the Resurrection and Renovation of them. For as according to the former Interpretation these Heavens will be no more at all, so according to the latter, these Heavens will be no more as now they are, and so though then they be yet they may be said to be no more. And *Until the Heavens in one of these senses shall be no more, may lyeth down and ariseth no more, yea, as it followeth in the close of the Verse,*

They shall not awake nor be raised out of their sleep.

Death is here compared to sleep, and the Resurrection to a waking. The Metaphor is very Elegant, and it hath been opened at the 13th Verse of the 3d Chapter, thither I refer the Reader.

Observe first, From the former words.

That the most durable Creatures are perishing, changeable Creatures.

The Heavens are an emblem of continuance: And (as hath been shewed) to say such a thing shall be till the Heavens be no more, is to say it shall ever be: Yet these Heavens are in a perishing condition, and shall be, if not totally Annihilated, yet so much altered from what they are, as will amount to this, *they are no more*: All those Scriptures come up to that, if they reach not the other sense, to which they put very hard. What is there of the Creature to be trusted? Earth is fading, yea, and Heaven too: Trust not in the Heavens, but in the God of Heaven, of whom it is said, *In him there is no variableness nor shadow of change*, God is so far from a real change, that he hath not the least shadow of change. But Creatures are so changeable, that there is not in them a shadow of unchangeableness. It is no wonder to see the sublinary World change, to see the state of Men change,

the

the Riches and Peace of Kingdoms change, the Beauty and Purity of a Church change, when even the Heavens shall change and be no more what they have been? When we are taught that the most durable things perish, and change, how changeable are those things which are most subject to perishing?

Secondly, Consider under what notions *Job* represents Death. *They shall not awake, nor be raised, and of their sleep and rest know not.*

Hence Observe, *we ought to familiarise death to our selves, so put it under the faintest and easiest apprehensions.*

Some translate Death into such terrible shapes, and represent it to themselves under such affrighting forms, that they live in bondage through the fear of Death all their dayes; do as the Spirit of God teacheth you. Cloath it with pleasant expressions, call it the Undressing and Unloathing of your selves, call it rest, conceive it under the notion of Sleep, and then you will not fear but welcome it. Is any man afraid to go to bed? Thus we should allay the Bitterness, beat down the Defamery, take off the Edge, and pull out the Sting of Death. By such sweet and soft thoughts of it, as the Spirit of God suggests. Sleep is a short death, and death is but a long sleep. The Holy Ghost here threatens with death smites the Israelites with a long sleep. *(Jer. 52. 17.)* *And they will sleep a perpetual sleep and shall not awake.* 'Tis a judgment to be cast into a sleep like Death, but 'tis a mercy that Death is but like a sleep; To sleep a perpetual sleep and not to awake is to die. But they who are dead, shall awake out of sleep. For as Death is a sleep, so it is but a sleep: Death is not a perpetual sleep, though he who in stead of sleeping, dieth, is said to fall into a perpetual sleep. Death compared with ordinary sleep, is a perpetual sleep, but Death in it self considered or considered rather according to the appointment of God, is not a perpetual sleep. There shall be an awakening and a rising, we shall sleep no more, when the Heavens are no more. *Job* is express for this in the 14th Chapter, and here he assures us that man shall awake from the Grave at last, while he saith it will be long ere he awakes. Man hath done his work before he falls into this sleep, but man must awake before he receive either his wages or punishment.

108 recon-
dere hinc
וְהָיָה הַחֲבֵרָה
sauri a re-
condendo, sic
דָּמִיּוּם י
a reponendo
quod in diem
crastinum i.e.
ut: alicui
reponcren-
tur. Druf.
Sepulchrum
est quasi
scrinium vel
capsa in-
quam repo-
nuntur corpora.

Qui a com-
muni homi-
num confor-
tio superari
sive ut immi-
nentia sibi
pericula sive
debita sup-
plicia decli-
narent, in
cavernis eti-
am in sepul-
chris habitare
solebant.
Bold.

Hide me in a Treasure, for the Original intimates, Treasures are hidden things, as the Notation both of the Greek and Latin words teacheth. A Treasure is substance or riches laid up for the day following, or for the time to come, *O that thou wouldst hide me in the Grave*, yet not as Trash but Treasure, not as a rotten Carcase, but as a precious Jewel: *The bodies of Believers are Treasures as well as their Souls; their earthly part is precious as well as their Heavenly.*

The Grave may betaken two ways: First, literally and literally, for the place of Burial, or for the house of Death.

Whence Note, *The Grave is a hiding place, the Grave is a sure hiding place*, as the Hebrew word signifies, *the Grave is a sure hiding place*.

When we are once hidden there, we are open to more violence: The Grave is a shelter from all Storms: We need not fear that it will either Rain or Blow through that House, that's the reason why they in the Book of the Revelation desired Death when the Vials of Gods wrath were pouring out upon the Earth. Though Adam have not been free from the rage of men in the Grave, yet none have felt it. *O that thou wouldst hide me in the Grave*, I have met with this strain of Grief before, therefore I do but touch it here.

Secondly, As the Grave in Scripture is taken for the place of the Dead, so some place where the Living are hid, or hide themselves, as the Hebrew word signifies, *the Grave is a hiding place*. In times of Persecution, the Saints were forced to bury themselves alive, because the malicious Enemy sought their lives, (Eze. 11. 36.) They wandered in Deserts, and in Mountains, and in Den, and in Caves of the Earth: Thus the old Believers were buried alive. It is said of Obadiah (1 Kings 18.) *Thou shalt be hid in a Cave*, by fifty in a Cave. These Caves were Graves of living men. Some understand *the meaning* of such a Grave: And that he did not desire Death, but the securing of his Life, or to be hid alive, not to be hid in Death: He would be somewhere in safe custody, out of the reach of those troubles which annoyed him: The next clause doth somewhat favour this sense, *O that thou wouldst hide me in the Grave*.

And keep me secret.

These words are but an Explication or Repetition of the former; *Job* doubles his Request to shew how strongly his heart was fixt upon it: *O that thou wouldst keep me secret, How long?*

Until thy wrath be past.

That is, the effects of wrath: The Letter of the Original is, *Nasus ira. que tumentur & fumant naso mani festari solet.* *thy nostril*, because in the Nose or Nostrils wrath and anger shew themselves, we breath anger, and the breath of the Lord is nothing else but his wrath, which like a stream of Brimstone kindles the fiery *Tophet*. (Isa. 30. 33.) *Job* desires the Lord to let this breath pass, and then he is willing to appear out of his Grave, or to be kept no longer secret: As if he had said, I cannot stand in the open view of thy wrath, or in the Face of thy fierce displeasure; *Oh that thou wouldst hide me till thy wrath be past*; *verti redire* *God put Moses in the cleft of the Rock, and hid him with his hand, sepo est a-* *while his glory passed by*, (Exod. 33. 12.) Much more have we need *verti recedere.* *to be hid while the wrath of God passeth by, or until his wrath be past.* *Hinc* *תשובה* *con-*

Hence Observe,

First, *God in his dealings towards man, sheweth himself like a wrathful man.* *verso animi.* *se ad Deum.* *תשובה*

The wrath of God is not a Passion in him, but an Action towards us. He Acts as men when they are angry, but he suffers nothing by his anger: He smites and wounds, and pulls down and destroys like a wrathful, yea, like an enraged man; yet he doth this in the exactest frame and sweetest composure of his Spirit: The wrath of God never disjoyns him, never puts him out of order, as the wrath of man doth. *The wrath of man is the rage of man, but the wrath of God is the reason of God.* His wrath toward all is full of serenity, and it is full of tender Mercy to his own.

Secondly, *Job* fearing the wrath of God, resorts to God for shelter and hiding, *O that thou wouldst hide me till thy wrath be past.* When a man (whom we fear) is angry with us we run from him, and go to some friend with this request, *O that you would hide me till the wrath of this man be over*; When *Rebecca* understood that her son *Esa* was wroth with *Jacob*, and

comforted himself purposing to kill him, she advised Jacob to flee to his Uncle Laban and tarry there, till his Brothers wrath should turn away, (Gen. 27. 43. 44.) She doth not direct him to go to Esau, and desire protection from him till his own wrath were turned away. Were it not strange if a King being wroth with one of his Subjects, he should go to the same King and say, *Hide me till thy wrath be past*, yet thus Job speaks.

Hence Observe,

That our only refuge from the wrath of God, is God himself.

Nothing can hide us from the wrath of God, but the Mercy of God. As God hides his people from the wrath of men, (Ps. 27. 5.) *In the time of trouble he shall hide me in his Pavilion, in the secret of his Tabernacle shall he hide me.* And again, *In the shadow of thy Wings will I make my refuge, until these calamities be overpast.* As (I say) God hides his people from the wrath of men, so also from his own wrath. When a Believer apprehends God angry, he knows not whither to go, but unto God: He appeals from God to God, from an angry God to a pleased God, from the wrath of God to the mercy of God, from God in himself to God in his Son. Carnal men have poor shifts, when God is angry they hide in man, Can the Power and Mercy of a Creature, be a covering against the wrath and Indignation of the Creator? Yet this is all the covering which a Carnal man enquires after. *The Kings and Captains (Rev. 6.) call upon the Rocks and Mountains to hide them.* That is, they apply themselves to worldly means, to worldly helps and powers, to these they cry, *hide us from the wrath of God*, but they know not what this meaneth, to make the love of God a refuge from the Anger of God. Such a spirit Christ discovers while he forbids the tears of the Daughters of Jerusalem, (Luke 23. 30.) *Weep not for me but weep for your selves, and for your Children: Why so? Sad dayes are coming, so sad, That they shall say to the Mountains fall on us, and to the Hills cover us;* Not as if they should think the Hills would hear or pity them, but because they could find none to do it, and they might as soon make a Mountain move to their help, as move men to help them.

Again, Mountains and Hills may be taken there for the greatest powers and strengths of men, or for men of great strength and power: In which sense it is said in the 2d of Isaiah, *the day*

of the Lord shall be against the high Mountains. So then, to call to the Mountains for covering in a day of trouble, is at best but to expect to be in the hand of man. These are miserable shifts. God doth so overrule the world by his Providence, that sometimes the Earth helps the women (Rev. 12. 16.) In a day of trouble, but the woman (that is, the true Church) doth not cry to the Earth (meer men of the world) for help; God makes the Hills and Mountains cover his people in a day of his wrath, but they do not go to Hills and Mountains for covering against his wrath. *David poses the Question (Psal. 135. 8.) Whether shall I fly from thy presence?* He resolves it presently, that neither Heaven nor Hell, nor the uttermost parts of the Earth could afford him a secure security, or a hiding-place from the Hand of God. *We must look for a protecting hand in God, when we are afraid of an attacking hand: Only Divine Love helps from Divine Wrath.* This was shadowed in the description of the Ark, in which the Tables of the Law were laid up. (Exod. 25.) There the Mercy-seat was put upon the Ark, the Cherubims covering it with their Wings, implying that the Mercy of God only protects us from his wrath. The wrath of God is caused by sin (which is the transgression of the Law) but to shew that Mercy covers from wrath, the Mercy-seat was made to cover the Ark wherein that Law was reserved, which discovers both the sin of man and the wrath of God against it. The wrath of God had never been revealed against man, if man had not sinned against the Law, yet now God sits between the Cherubims over the Mercy-seat, to cover that Law which through sin causeth wrath. With one hand he gives a Law, and with another hand he hid us from wrath. *Out of his hand went a fiery Law, (Deut. 33. 2.) And one of his Hand went a shining Gospel, and with that a Son of Righteousness with healing in his Wings:* When that fire would burn us, this Son warms us, while the flames of that would consume us, the Wings of this overshadowed us, and hide us till the wrath of God be past. Thus our hiding from the wrath of God is in the love of God. Hence also that gracious invitation, (Isa 26. 20.) *Come my people enter into your Chambers, and sit the indignation by overpass:* Those Chambers into which God invited his people, are none other but himself; When they could Te. tul. lib. not build or find out Chambers to hide themselves while his de resur. cur. indignation smoked, himself will be their Chamber. One of nis. Bold.

the Ancients interprets those Chambers to be the Grace, into which the Saints should willingly go to hide themselves in the time of Anticrist's rage, of which he conceives that to be a Prophecy. However, we are sure *The Name of the Lord is not only a hiding Chamber, but a strong Tower, the Righteous run into it and are safe. O that thou wouldst hide me until thy wrath be past.*

Thirdly, Job perceiving a storm of wrath about him, dares not hide it, but seeks a hiding place.

Hence Observe,

Man is not able to bear the wrath of God, or to stand before God when he is angry.

Job was a man of unspotted Integrity, Perfect, Upright, fearing God, eschewing evil, yet he was afraid, when God appeared in wrathful dispensations. The wrath of God is threatened in the Word is slighted by unbelievers, but when it is felt together in the Conscience or upon the Flesh, the lowest man will hide. The Love of God is undervalued by those who know it not, but a soul that hath once tasted that the Lord is Gracious, and lives in the love of God, this soul is swallowed up with love, and values it more than life. 'Tis so with those who know not the wrath of God, their hearts being hardened. They say with Pharaoh, *Who is the Lord?* But when Conscience is awakened, the Heart touched, the Eye opened, then Horror and Admiration take hold of them, as pain upon a Woman in Travel. (Isa. 2. 19.) *They shall go into the holes of the Rocks, and into the Caves of the Earth, for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of his Majesty, when he arise to shake terribly the Earth.* When God comes with terrible shakings, they shall hide themselves whose terror made others shake. The wrath of a powerful man is dreadful, *The wrath of a King* (saith Solomon) *is as the roaring of a Lion.* What is then the wrath of God? If Rehobab was so sensible of the wrath of Esau against Jacob, that he durst not venture Jacob into his angry presence? What are they who make no haste to be hidden from an angry God, or to have the anger of God appeased, and turned away from them?

Fourthly Observe,

There may be sensible feelings of the wrath of God, even upon those who are dearest unto God.

It is Job that prays, *Hide me till thy wrath be overpast.* There was indeed more fear of wrath among Believers under Legal

Admi-

administration, then after that fuller breaking forth and appearance of the grace of God bringing salvation under the Gospel, we may understand that of the Apostle (Rom. 8. 15.) *Temo de rebus et spiritu de bondage et facti sumus liberi* (according to this interpretation) speaks not of a person, but of the whole state of the Church; giving the cause thus, ye have not received the spirit of bondage to fear, yet are under the Gospel; the spirit of bondage was, that which properly belonged to the times of the Law, when state of Gospel light appeared; fear and remorse held the people of God in bondage. But this is the time of grace, the day of love, the day of bleeding the glory of God abroad in our hearts by the holy Ghost; therefore be of good cheer, live like freemen and like sons; not like bondmen or servants.

*Amor Christi
fuit gratia
deus, deus
et deus de
rebus.*

Finally, he praises hide me till thy wrath be past: *Job* was sensible of wrath, but he knew assuredly that it was not lasting wrath. Hence Observe,

The wrath of God to his own people, is not an everlasting wrath.

The wrath of God against wicked men is an everlasting wrath, they cannot be hid till the wrath of God be overpast, for it will never pass. (Job. 3. 36.) *He who believeth not the Lord, shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth upon him, and shall abide to all eternity.* The appearings of wrath are terrible, but who can abide the shidings of wrath? *Who may abide the day of his coming? And who shall stand when he appeareth? He is like a Refiner's fire, (Mal. 3. 2.)* Wicked men cannot abide the coming of Christ, when he is but like refining fire to purge out their dross, how then will they abide the day of his coming, when he is like consuming fire, to devour both them and their dross?

Sixthly, *Job* was under grievous pains, a cup of sorrow was put to his mouth, yet he moves not so much to have the Cup of sorrow pass from him, as to have the wrath of God pass from him.

Hence Observe, *A good heart is more sensible of Divine displeasure, than of our mere pain.*

He fears the appearance of wrath more than the feeling of

smart. It is a work of grace to be afraid of the anger of God, and it provokes him as much which his wrath, as when his love is slighted. Many tremble at the corrections of God, and others are few who tremble at the anger of God. The holy Prophet (Jer. 10. 24.) seems to invite correction, so he might be free from anger. Carry me O Lord, but not in thine anger. Let me see thou lovest me, and then smite me if thou wilt: anger smarte worse then any rod upon the soul of a beleever; but tis the rod of God, not the wrath of God which makes an unbeliever smart. Let there be no more mighty bell and thunder, take away this delusion, saith a Pharaoh, take away thy displeasure: let thy wrath passe; such a Job, a David, yet at last the wrath of God will be more painfull then pain, more deadly then death it self to a Pharaoh, wrath will burn hotter then fire in hell for ever more.

Pater hinc
tam acerbum
esse omnibus
ira Dei sen-
sum ut nihil
sit quod ho-
mines non
perferre ma-
lint. Merl.

Lastly. Saw Job temper his rage; he trembled at the wrath of God, and was afraid: we read him full of faith and confidence, (chap. 13. 16, 81.) I know I shall be justified, and he also shall be my salvation; there he stood in the light of the favour of God, here he is clouded with fear, and compassed about with darkness.

Hence observe the difference betwixt the wrath of God, and the wrath of man. That the best of beleivers do not remain the same forever, and evidence of holy faith.

There estate is always sure, but their estate is not always clear: their condition is the same, but their apprehensions about it vary. Now they overflow with joy because they see the pleasing face of God, soon after they are filled with fear, and would be hidden from his wrath. O that thou wouldst bid me till thy wrath be past; that's his last wish.

That thou wilt appoint me a set time.

חנן לי מן
constituas mi-
hi legem aut
praeceptum,
statutum i.e.
certum &
praefinitum
terminum
Merc.

This is his second wish, and it is a very reasonable one. But for what? or to what purpose would he have a set time? Times relate to things or actions. As to every purpose there is a time set (Eccl. 3. 1.) so, to set a time supposeth a purpose for it. What was Job's purpose for which he thus earnestly desires a time might be set.

We may very clearly referre it to the wish foregoing. O that thou wouldst bid me till thy wrath be past. As if he had said, as I beg to

go to Bed in the Grave, ſo I beg of thee to appoint me a ſet time when I ſhall go to that deſired and longed for Bed of the Grave.

O ſet thou wouldſt appoint me a ſet time. The word which we Tranſlate ſet time, ſignifies properly a Statute, a Law, or Ordinance: There is a double Law, a Law of Things, and a Law of Times, and the Word ſignifies both, therefore we tranſlate well, *O ſet thou wouldſt appoint me a ſet time*, or a Law concerning the time; But ſometimes we ask God a ſet time: God ſets us a time, but may we deſire God to ſet us a time? The Jews were approved for this by *Moses*, (*Exod. 17: 13.*) *They ſimile to be holy One of Iſrael*, they put him a time, or ſet him a day, by which if he did not help them, they did not believe he could help them. It is inſufferable preſumption to ſet God a time: And it wants not danger to move God to ſet us a time. All the actings of *Job* in this ſtate are not warrantable.

Many of them are not for our Imitation, but Caution: *Job* ex- preſſeth a troubled ſpirit, while he Prays for an abatement of his trouble; This Prayer was not the breathing of his grace, but the breaking forth of his ſorrow: He would be in the Grave, he would have a ſet time, he muſt have things brought to an Iſſue; In all this we ſee not a rule for Prayer, but an error of Paſſion.

Hence Note, *That extremity of pain may put a good man upon unwiſed Petitions.*

A diſtreſſed Soul often makes diſtracted Prayers, and deſires more than his own will, than that the will of God may be done. The Will of God, his Word of Command, or his Word of Promise are our Rule and Warrant what to aſk: They aſk beſides all the Rules which God hath ſet who aſk a ſet time. Hence take two Deductions.

Fiſt, *That it is the ſole priviledg of God to ſet and appoint times.*

As God hath appointed to men the bounds of their Habitation, ſo alſo he hath determined the times, (*Acts 17: 26.*) And as he hath ſet the times of Nations and People in general, ſo of ſingular Perſons, *My times are in thy hand* (ſaith *David*, *Pſal. 121: 15.*) That is, thou haſt the diſpoſe of them: While he ſaith *My times*, he doth not ſpeak himſelf the Maſter, but the Servant of time. Again, *My times are in thy hand*, that is, all my times I reſerre

Sciamus hez perturbatum animalis Jobum dicere nec certe nec quicquam hinc poſſe colligi, niſi quod levotiam mali quoquo modo poſtulas. Merc. Non eſt quod hec quis accuratius ad legitimam rationis leges exigat. Merl.

none of them in my own hand: My times of trouble and my times of comfort, my times of joy and my times of sorrow, my times of honour and my times of reproach, when I shall fall in to affliction, and when I shall be delivered out of affliction, how long I shall live and when I shall die, all these times are in thy hand: Not did David at all desire to have his times of any part of his times out of Gods hand; And as it is our duty to leave our times in Gods hand, so it is our comfort that they are in so good, in so wise a Hand: We should not only be content but rejoyce that our times are there. Man is not wise enough to use the times which God sets him, much less is he Wise enough to set his own times.

Secondly Note,

It is our duty to refer all the Circumstances of our Petitions to the Wisdom of God.

We may be Suiters to God but we must not be his Counsellors, nor our own Carvers when or where, how much or by what means we would have the Mercies which we ask for. *Job* spoke well in one respect, though he would have a set time, yet he took not upon him to set the time. It was his failing to desire a set time, but it had been a great sin for him to set the time. Man must expect a Law from God, he must not give himself a Law, much less may he give the Law to God. *O that thou wouldst appoint me a set time.*

And that thou wouldst remember me.

Et confitebor tibi. This is his 3d desire, he would be remembered: Some joys these two latter wishes into one. *O that thou wouldst appoint a set time wherein to remember me;* Not for what, or in what would he be remembered? Either thus, remember to hide me in the grave at that set time, or Lord when thou hidest me in the grave be pleased to remember me. The grave is a place of forgetfulness, David complains (*Psal. 31. 12.*) *I am forgotten as a dead man out of mind.* *Job* is willing to be among the Dead, but not to be forgotten, or out of the mind of God. Let the World forget me, I can bear that, but I cannot bear it that God should forget me: *O that thou wouldst remember me.* Heman (*Psal. 88. 5.*) describing his sorrows, saith he, *was free among the dead like as the slain that lie in the Grave, whom to rememberst no more.* Dead men are, as if they were, not only out of the memory of men, but

of God himself: *Job* was content to die out of the World, but not to die out of the Memory of God: He liked a grave of Earth, but he liked not the grave of Forgetfulness: *Set me a time for the Grave, and remember to hide me there, or remember me when I am hidden there.*

Lastly, This Prayer, *remember me*, may be understood as a general Prayer for good at the hand of God: The remembrance of God intimates all good to man. 'Tis good enough if he remember us for good, as *Nehemiah* prayed he would; to remember notes chiefly these two things.

First, To value and esteem: Worthless things are not fit for a Treasury: much less for our Memory; who would keep a Record of that which no man cares to know, nor shall be the wiser if he do know it?

Secondly, It notes Care. When we would help a friend or do him a courtesy, we remember him and have him often in our thoughts.

Some restrain *Job's* request for remembrance to that special Act of Power and Mercy, the raising of his body from the grave. Others confine it to the repairing of his broken Family, and the gift of Children in stead of those who were slain: As if he deplored the loss of his Sons and Daughters, and that he was as a Tree cut down, which sends out no Suckers, or that he was (as the Eunuch saith of himself in the Prophet) a dry tree, which bears neither Leaf nor Fruit. And therefore Prays, *O that thou wouldst remember me in this.* The word is often used by God in reference to that special mercy: The giving sape usurpat. Text saith) the Lord remembered Rachel, (Gen. 30. 22.) *Hanna* qui prolem if thou wilt indeed look on the affliction of thy Handmaid, and re- tant, praser- member me, and not forget thy Handmaid, but wilt give unto chine. tim masculi- Handmaid a Manchild, then &c. The Hebrew word signifying nam. Bold. a Manchild (not that used by *Hanna*) springs from this Root, ארר ארר que because a Manchild preserves the memory of the Family, where- hic habetur as the Female or Daughter loseth her name in Marriage. The venit Za- answer which God gave to *Hanna*, runs also in the same stile char i. e. (ver. 16.) And *Elkanah* knew *Hanna* his wife, and the Lord remem- masculus brea her. When the Lord took away *Job's* Children, he took quasi patris: from him his remembrance, or those who would have preserved memoria. his.

his name and memory: Which *Bilhad* seems to aim at in his Description of the Judgments of God upon wicked men (*Job* 18. 17.) *His remembrance shall perish in the Earth, and he shall have no name in the streets:* That is, he shall have no Son to bear his Name, or to keep his Memorial alive, when he is dead.

Now whether we understand this passage in general, or restrain it to either of these Particulars, we may Learn.

That there is nothing more desirable then to be remembered of God, and that to be remembered of God is the accomplishment of all our desires:

We can ask no more of God but to remember us: For as our remembrance of God is the summe of all our duty to him, so Gods remembrance of us is the summe of all his mercies to us. When the Ark had floated, and had been tossed many dayes upon the Waters of that mighty Deluge, the Text saith, *God remembered Noah* (*Gen.* 8. 3.) Though our Ark be driven in a tempestuous Sea, yet it shall neither sink nor split, while we Sail in the thoughts of God. It may be much if some men remember us: When *Joseph* a Prisoner had expounded the Butlers dream to liberty and enlargement, all the Fee he asked for his pains was, *Remember me when thou comest to Pharaoh:* That is, speak a good word for me, do me a courtesie at Court, when thou art restored thither. The ungrateful Butler forgot *Joseph*, but God did not: And though *Pharaohs* Butler did not remember *Joseph* for Interpreting his Dream, yet God sent *Pharaoh* a Dream, which at last caused the Butler to remember both his own fault against *Pharaoh*, and his forgetfulness of *Joseph*. If God remember us he will find our fault, way or other that men shall. And though a Friend who loves us and keeps us in his memory, may not be able to do us good (he may want power though he want no good will) yet the Power of God is as strong as his Memory, he is able to do us good, and can command all both persons and things to work together for our good. 'Tis a mercy, if God think upon us, though it be to afflict us, if he remembers us though it be with a Rod; (even that remembrance is an evidence of his Care over us, and love to us.) Then how comfortable is it for him to remember us with a Staffe for our support and comfort!

The Thief upon the Cross gathers all his petitions into this one,

me, Lord, remember me when thou comest to thy Kingdom, if we have but a place in the Memory of Christ, we shall not want a place in the Kingdom of Christ. Let us get into the heart of God, and we are sure enough, to have all the holy desires of our own Hearts: If we once have a place in the Heart of God, he will not cast us out of his Memory, though he casts us into trouble. He remembers his in Prison and in Chains, in sick Beds, and in the Valley of the shadow of Death: Though he bury us in the Grave, yet he will bury his Thoughts of us. We use to say of men, out of sight, out of mind; but, as we cannot be hid in any secret place out of the sight of God, so God will never let us fall out of his Mind.

From all take this Deduction.

If it be such a treasure if *Deus in idcirco* to have God remember us, when a treasure of wrath and misery is it to be everlastingly forgotten by God!

Wicked men shall never be remembered by God for good, nor shall they ever be forgotten for evil. The Memory which God keeps of them, and of what they have done, will torment them as much as their own memory of it will. How glad would they be if God would but forget them, how glad would they be if they could forget themselves! But as they can remember no good they have done, so they shall not forget the evil they have done, and as God will not remember them for good, so he cannot (because he will not), and he will not because he is just) forget to pour out upon them the utmost and extreamest evils.

Job having presented God with this threefold Request: To be hid in the Grave; To have a set time appointed him; And to be remembered: He passeth from Petitioning to a strange kind of Questioning, and from both to the Highest and Noblest kind of Resolving.

Vers. 14. *If a man die, shall he live again? All the days of my appointed time will I wait till my change come.*

There is much variety of Conjecture about the meaning of these words.

Take this Precaution, Job doth not speak here as doubting, whether a man that dies shall live any more; He is clear for the

Non est dubi- tantis de re- surrectione mortuorum ad vitam æternam. the resurrection of the body unto life, and for the life eternal of whole man after the resurrection. It is usual both in Scripture and common usage to propound that by way of doubt or question, which yet is held as an undoubted position. As did neither doubt that man shall die, nor that he shall live again: though he put an if to the one, and a question about the other.

Si mortuus fuerit vir impius, fieri ne potest vivat? Chal. The Chaldee Paraphrast seems to understand here of eternal life, but applies it to a wicked man: *If a man die, shall he, if a wicked man die, shall he live again? shall he enjoy eternal life?* no, though he live eternally, yet he shall not enjoy life one moment. His second life shall be the second death. He shall live as life notes the union of soul and body, but he shall not live as life notes the communion of man with God.

Philippus. But though this be true, yet I conceive it quite beside the scope.

Tantum opus admiratur, non negat. Merc. Secondly, Others interpret it of the resurrection in general: And render the question as an admiration: *If a man die, shall he live again?* He shall live, and is it not wonderful that he should! The resurrection is a miraculous work: it shall raise our thoughts about the power of the everliving God: when we hear his power can raise man from death to everlasting life.

In scripturis interrogatio Yet usually in Scripture when the interrogation is put without a negative particle, the sense is negative, as (Psa. 56: 7.) *Shall they escape by iniquity?* no, they shall not escape: and when the interrogation is put with a negative particle, the sense is affirmative: as (Jer. 8: 9.) *Shall I not visit for these things, saith the Lord, and shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as this?* Yes, I will visit for these things, and my soul shall be avenged on such a nation as this. According to this interpretation, *If a man die, shall he live again?* must be rendered by a denial, he shall not live again. Hence

A third opinion expounds it by a plain negation, *If a man die, shall he live again?* no, he shall not, that is, he shall not live in this world, nor return any more to a natural life. And hence

Conditiona- liter simi- sat Cajeta- nus. A Fourth interprets Job as speaking conditionally, or upon an impossible supposition: As if he had said, I know and am assured, That if a man dies he cannot live again a life of nature. But if such a thing might be, and God would appoint me a set time when it should be, how willingly would I die and wait all those

those days of my appointed time, (how many soever they should be) till my change come; that is, till God restore me from the state of death and the grave, to such an estate of outward comforts and abundance as I once enjoyed. But I cannot conceive Job so in love with a natural life, as thus to hanker after it by such remote conditions, and groundlesse wishes. And therefore,

Fifthly, I encline to those, who expound the question in the first part of the verse, as an absolute negation: *If a man die, he shall live no more.*, that is, a natural life. And the latter part of the verse, (*All the days of my appointed time will I wait till my change come*) as a testimony either of his submission to the will of God for the time of his death, or of his faith and full assurance of a resurrection to eternal life. As if he had said, *Though when I die I shall not live again in this world, yet I am willing to die when God will, and I beleve I shall live again in the world to come, and do therefore wait in faith till this change shall come.* Hence

Sixthly, Job is here conceived correcting his former wish, and reprehending himself for it; As if he had said, *I indeed desired the Lord to appoint me a set time, when he would restore me, but why do I vex my self and trouble the Lord with vain wishes; as if this were a petition besitting me to ask of God to grant? why should I expect that which was never granted to any man: That being dead I might live again?* *Quasi seipsum reprehendas quod talia oras, &c. Sanct.*

Lastly, Some give out his meaning thus, If thou wouldst grant me my wish, and hide me in the grave, appointing me a set time, when thou wouldst be pleased to do this for me; then should I think my self happy, because if I were once dead, I know I shall return no more to the miseries of this life, upon which condition I would be glad to wait with patience for the grave, what time soever thou shouldst appoint me, till that my change by death should come: or, being dead and laid in my grave, I would wait thy appointed time for my resurrection unto life.

All the days of my appointed time will I wait till my change come.

That God appoints out the time of man, and that man shall live out and cannot outlive that appointment, was shewed at

יָמַי לְמִלְחָמָה
יָמַי לְמִלְחָמָה
Cum his diebus
militia mea
expetabo. Mon.

the 5th verſe, I will not here renew that diſcourſe.

The Hebrew is *all the days of my warfare*, The reaſon of which hath alſo been ſhewed (*chap. 7. 1.*) The days of man are but travel and warfare, a continual combat with temptations and trials, as was opened there: The Scripture delights to ſet forth the ſorrows of mans life under thoſe two ſimilitudes of a wayfaring man and a warfaring man. Under both notions, the duty of the text (waiting) is alſo ſhadowed.

To wait hath four things in it.

First, An act of patience, he that waits muſt be content to ſtay: *He that beleeves will not make haſt*, that is, he waits, and he that waits makes haſte to beleeve, or hope, which is the ſecond thing.

Secondly, It hath an act of hope in it, he that waiteth is in expectation to receive: He hopes mercy will come at laſt: To wait upon God implies there is ſomewhat to be had from God. He that hath no hope will never wait.

Thirdly, An act of humility, he that is in a waiting condition is in a low condition, And as his condition is low, ſo his ſpirit ſhould be lowly, waiting ſpeaks the duty of a ſervant.

Fourthly, The waiting here intended carries in it utmoſt perſeverance, *All the days of my appointed time will I wait*. Some wait, but 'tis only for a time: they are ſhort-breath'd and their patience quickly tires. That wicked King ſaid, *this evil is of the Lord, why ſhould I wait upon him any longer?* (2 Kin. 6. 33.) He that waits indeed, continues waiting, he waits long, and he will wait yet longer. As a good heart will not let God wait long, no not at all (willingly) for obedience, ſo he is willing to wait as long as God ſees good for deliverance. We muſt not let God ſtay long for our work, but we muſt ſtay as long as God pleaſeth for his work.

Hence Obſerve,

First, *It is our duty to wait Gods time fully.*

All the days of my appointed time will I wait; and this both in regard of perſonal and of publike deſires or needs, (*Hab. 2. 2, 3.*) *The viſion is for an appointed time, but as the end it ſhall ſpeak and not lie*, that is, it ſhall not fail: All failing is a kinde of lying: He that fails of truth when he ſpeaks, lies in word, and he that fails of performing what he ſpeaks, lies in deed. The viſion of God ſpeaks and will not lie: but it ſpeaks not till the end

end, therefore we must wait till the end : so the Prophet adviseth in the next words, *though it tarry, wait for it, for it will certainly come, and not tarry.* It will not tarry beyond the time, but it may tarry to the very end of the time : then wait the longest day, and to the utmost of that day. It is said that the people of Israel were ashamed, when they saw that Moses staid so long, (Exo. 33.) they could wait no longer, they thought he was lost in the mount : *Come, let us make us Gods, to go before us, for as for this Moses we know not what is become of him ;* They who will not stay for God, make haste to Idols, and they who will not wait in the way of God, runne destructive ways. Samuel directed Saul to go down to Gilgal, and there to stay for him seven days (1 Sam. 10. 8.) according to this appointment Saul tarried seven days, (1 Sam. 13. 8.) but Samuel came not, and the people were scattered from him : hereupon Saul calls for the burnt offering and peace offerings, and he offered his burnt offering : and was he not to be excused in this ? had not he waited long enough ? Samuel said he could come the seventh day, and Saul waited for him seven days : why then doth Samuel chide with him (at the 11th verse) saying, *What hast thou done ?* Saul answers, *Because thou camest not within the days appointed, I forced my self and offered a burnt offering.* But would Samuel break promise ? was there yea and nay with him ? How is it then that Saul saith, *he came not at the time appointed :* Saul staid seven days, but he staid not seven days quite out, he staid the seventh day and a great part of it, and no Samuel came, but Saul would not stay the last hour, Samuel came at the end of the seventh day, and so made his word good, but because Saul waited not to the end of the seventh day, he fell into that great evil. *Thou hast done foolishly,* saith Samuel (ver. 13.) *and thy kingdom shall not continue,* because thy patience was so short thy power shall be shortened. Take heed of giving up your hopes : say not the Lords time is past, he will not come. We know what they do who are obliged to pay money upon bonds, on a certain day. It satisfies not the Law, that they waited at the place appointed, about noon or toward the evening of that day, and the creditour came not, they must wait till the going down of the Sun, and then make the tender, - or else the forfeiture may be taken. Thus we must wait on God to the last day, and every part of the last day,

till our changes or our comforts come. If we give over before the Sun go down, we ſhall go down in darkneſſe. *To have need of patience* (Heb. 10. 36, 37.) *that when you have done the will of God, ye may receive the promiſe*: that is, the thing promiſed. As we need the patience of labourers to doe the will of God, to the patience of waiters, to tarry for our answer and reward.

I will wait till my change come.

And one would think *Job* needed not to wait long for that: for, ſaid he not (*chap. 10. 17.*) *changes and warre are upon me*? *Job* was under perpetual changes, and his were great changes, changes from a prosperous to an afflicted eſtate, from health to ſickneſſe, from honour to diſgrace, from riches to poverty, and though his afflictions hung long upon him, yet he had changes of affliction: freſh and freſh evils, *changes and war*, or changes of war were againſt him: as he complained (*chap. 10. 17.*) God brought freſh armies to charge him every day, and doth he now want a change? and who is there that liveth and doth not change? we change (though not ſenſibly, yet) in ſome ſenſe or other every moment. Changes are upon us, changes of time, of place, of condition, and of affection. *Man conſtanteſt non*, (ſaith *Job* at the beginning of this Chapter) we are only conſtant in changes: what then is the meaning of this deſired change?

Man hath three great changes, and they are all three taken in here; according to a threefold opinion about the interpretation of theſe words.

*Donec veniet
aerum vicissi-
tudo & status
hic meus muta-
tur in melius,*
Fold.

First, Some underſtand the change for which *Job* waited, to be a change in his outward condition. A change from weakneſſe to ſtrength, from poverty to riches, from ſorrow to joy, he waited for deliverances from his preſent evil, and to be re-eſtated in his former comforts. Though *Job* needed (if ever man did) ſuch a change as this, yet (I conceive) this was not the change for which he promiſeth here to wait. But

*Aben Ezra ex-
ponit diſceſſus
meus, i. e. donec
hinc migrem, de
morte intelligit
tanquam ſim-
plicius, Merc.*

Secondly, *Till my change come*, that is, till death come. Many both of the Rabbins and others go this way, and judge it the moſt proper interpretation, *All the days of my appointed time I will wait*, till I die: or, I will live waiting for a change by death; death is a great change, the great change not only of
this

this or that man, but of mankind. Death brings a change to all, to good and bad, to beleevers and to infidels, though the change which it brings to these differing persons be as different as their natures. When the Saints die, they have a change, and no change: as a Worthy amongst us once said, when he was ready to die, *I shall change my place but not my company*: I shall have a new house but my old society; The Saints converse with God, they live with God, while they live in the world, they converse with Christ and have communion with the spirit, they converse (among men) chiefly with good men on earth, and with all these they shall converse in heaven, here is no change: yet the Saints have a great change, and a blessed one when they die: they change from all outward evils, all their troubles shall be removed; they change also from spiritual evils, all their corruptions shall remove, there shall not be so much as any sin or any remnant of sin remaining in them, when they remove from hence: here is a happy change: yea, they shall have not only no sin in them, but no temptation without them: no Satan to tempt, as well as no corruption to side with temptation: when wicked men die they have a change too, but it is a miserable change: theirs is a change from evil to worse, from bad to worst of all; They have a change from fading comforts to lasting sorrow: or they have a change from temporary sorrows to everlasting sorrows; *Son, remember* (saith *Abraham* in the parable to *Dives*) *that thou in thy life time hast received thy good things*: thou faredst deliciously every day, thou wast clothed with purple and fine linnen, but see thy change: thou who hadst a table spread and furnished with delicate meats, thou who hadst a cup brim full, yea running over with delicious wines, now thou hast not so much as a drop of water to cool thy tongue. This is the change which wicked men shall have in death, from pleasure to pain, or from short pains to eternal pain, from a few moth-eaten, worm-eaten, dying, decaying delights, to those griefs which cannot die, to those griefs which as a worm shall gnaw upon their souls and consciences worse then death. Some wicked men are as miserable as they are wicked in this world, *The wicked travel with pain all their days* (chap. 15.) yet they shall travel with greater pain when they die: their present sorrows are but the beginning of sorrows: now they doe but sip of that cup, which they must drink up dregs and all for ever.

Death

Death is a change to all; dying Sains change from bad to good, from good to best: when wicked men die, they change from bad to worse, from worse to worst of all.

*Hypotesis Jobi
quod ira Dei a-
bitura quod
annus gratia
venturus quod
statio ipsius &
militia certis
diebus definita,
quod spes sit,
quod decessia
ejus ventura
præbent argu-
mentum mag-
num resurre-
ctionis mor-
tuorum.
Tota enim dis-
putatio Jobi
eo colligitur ut
probat in rebus
ex terminis non
esse signa iræ
vel gratiæ, in
hac vita non
dari id quod fi-
deles sperant i-
deoque nihil
ipsis conveni-
entius esse,
quam anhelare
ad mortem.
Coc.
ἐκ νεκρῶν vi-
vacet. 70. do-
nec rursum fiam
Donec veniat
sancta nativi-
tas mea Sym.
Renascentur qui
resurgit & in-
greditur no-
vum vitæ cur-
riculum.*

Thirdly, This change is interpreted of the resurrection; Job desires to die presently, and would wait willingly till the resurrection, knowing that then he should be freed from all affliction; One of the ancients renders it, *I will wait until my holy birth-day come*: The resurrection is a birth-day to the world. The earth and sea shall be in travel and be delivered (he that is raised from death begins a new life) They took dead men into their womb, and shall (by the power of God) return them living. There shall not be one abortive or stillborn in that great birth-day. Some expound that regeneration which Christ speaks of (*Matth. 19. 28.*) of the resurrection, and give the sense only with the alteration of a point, thus, *Ye which have followed me, shall in the regeneration (or resurrection) when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.* Which reading Beza a learned interpreter affirms, that he hath observed in five ancient copies: implying that when the bodies and souls of the Saints shall be married again together, never to be separated by death, that will be as a new birth-day to them all. However 'tis clear beyond dispute that the resurrection day of Christ is called in Scripture both the day of his begetting, and of his birth. For that of (*Psal. 2. 7.*) *Thou art my son this day have I begotten thee*, is interpreted by the Apostle of the resurrection of Christ, *Act. 13.* where having said (*ver. 30.*) *God hath raised him from the dead*, he subjoins (*vers. 32, 33.*) *And we declare unto you glad tidings, how that the promise which was made unto the Fathers, God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that he hath raised up Jesus again, as it is also written in the second Psalme: Thou art my son, this day have I begotten thee.* And that the resurrection of Christ is his birth as well as his begetting is proved by the same Apostle, who calleth him expressly *The firstborn from the dead* (*Col. 1. 18.*) Now as the first birth-day of man into the world is a change: So this second birth-day will be a greater change. As the Apostle disputes it all along (*1 Cor. 15.*) how great a change will that be when mortality shall put on immortality, when corruption shall put on incorruption, when that which is sown a natural body shall be

be raised a ſpiritual body; Hence the Apoſtle concludes at the 51th verſe, *We ſhall not all ſleep, but we ſhall all be changed:* which the Vulgar Latine reads thus, *we ſhall all riſe, but we ſhall not all be changed*, and another, as the learned *Beza* hath obſerved upon that place; *we ſhall all ſleep, but we ſhall not all be changed.* For theſe not obſerving that the Apoſtle in this place ſpeaks only of the bodies of the Elect, and knowing that the bodies of the wicked ſhall not have (though they ſhall have ſome change) ſuch a change as is here ſpoken of, upon theſe grounds they have thus boldly altered the text, to ſerve their own ſenſe: whereas both the Syriake and Arabike interpreters keep to the Original greek, from which we tranſlate, *we ſhall not all ſleep, but we ſhall all be changed.* For the Apoſtle treating of the ſtate of all Saints at the laſt day, of whom many ſhall then be found alive, he declares what ſhall be done to them: *They* (ſaith he) *ſhall not ſleep*, that is, they ſhall not die, yet they ſhall be changed; ſo that, though ſome of the Saints ſhall not be raised becauſe they ſhall not die, yet all at that day ſhall finde a change: *We ſhall not all ſleep, but we ſhall all be changed.* This is the great change: In the morning of the reſurrection we ſhall all put on freſh ſuits, freſh ſuits of fleſh and robes of glory upon them, ſuch as ſhall never change, much leſſe wear out, ſuch as ſhall be freſh, not only as the garments of the Iſraelites forty years in the wilderneſſe, but for ever. After this change we ſhall hear no more of changing. And that we ſhall have ſuch a change the Apoſtle ſpeaks again, (*Phil. 3. 23.*) *Who ſhall change our vile body, that it may be faſhioned like to his glorious body:* The body ſhall be caſt into a more excellent mould, even as a veſſel that is broken or out of faſhion, is put into the Goldſmiths hand to be changed or new made; yea, there ſhall be a change at that day not only of the body but of the whole man, the ſoul ſhall be changed, not in the ſubſtance of it, but in the perfections of it, for then full glory ſhall be poured into the ſoul, and it ſhall have a better eſtate, though not in the nature of it, yet in the degree of it, then it had before. Then mans glory ſhall be compleated when ſoul and body ſhall meet again, and be reunited: the union of ſoul and body conſtitutes man, a ſoul alone is not man, as a body alone is not; Now in the day of their reſpouſals, what gifts will the Lord beſtow? what tokens of his royall bounty? Such gifts, ſuch tokens ſure, as will convince

vince man that his change is come, and abundantly recompence all his days of waiting for it.

Again Observe,

That the assured hope of the resurrection to eternal life, will support the soul with patience under all the evils of this life.

Job could willingly undergo any condition, because a change was coming: Though we fight with beasts as long as we live, we have advantage enough in this one truth, *the dead shall rise*, (1 Cor. 15. 31.) what though we endure hardship in this life, we shall arise to a better life. The Authour to the Hebrews (chap. 11. 35.) reports the courage and constancy of the Jewish Martyrs upon this account, *They were tortured not accepting deliverance that they might obtain a better resurrection.* But are there two sorts or two degrees of resurrection? one good and another better, that he saith, they looked to obtain a better resurrection?

I answer,

He calls that which they expected a better resurrection, not comparatively to another resurrection, but either first, in comparison of that life which they were to lose, if they would keep the faith; or Secondly, in comparison of that life which they might have kept if they would have let go their faith; or submitted to idolatry. And their life in this latter sense may elegantly be called a resurrection, because they being but as dead men in the hands of those tyrants for professing the faith, were offered their lives again, or should have been restored to a free enjoyment of their lives, if they would have renounced or denied the faith. But these noble professors thought the offer of such a life too vile a price to sell their faith for. And therefore they despised that deliverance which was only a resurrection from a threatned death, to a transitory life, in comparison of that true or better resurrection, which would be from an inflicted death to eternal life. Now if the Saints under the old Testament were thus Heroical in sufferings upon the hope of a future resurrection, about which they had no open direct promise, nor any very clear evidence, how much more should we who have the doctrine of the resurrection written as with a beam of the Sun, together with the glory and the happiness which shall follow? The assurance of a change to any better state, is apt to raise in man high resolutions in any the worst estate wherein he is. And any the hope

of mending our condition enables us to bear a bad condition : hope is the support and pillar of the soul ; in its heaviest pressures, that which adds infinitely to the punishment of the damned in hell ; is, that as they are in an ill condition ; so they know their condition will never mend, they cannot say *they will wait till their change come*, they must suffer, but they cannot hope ; Their change shall never come, though they should hope for it, because they have no ground of hope, everlasting wrath is determined upon them. This makes them compleatly miserable. To be without hope of good, is worse then the enduring of evil : the damned in hell are more pained with thinking that their miserable condition will never change, then they are in bearing their present misery. The Saints in heaven are in a happy estate, and they know it will never change, they joy as much in this assurance, as they do in the sense of their present happiness : they enjoy all their joys at once, because their joy is one, and shall ever be the same ; Their condition is so good that they need not desire a change, and so sure, that they need not fear a change. It is the extremity and the height of a good estate to be beyond the fear, and of an evil estate to be beyond the hope of change : it is an abatement of our comforts, to enjoy good which may be changed for evil, and an abatement of our sorrows to endure evil which may be changed for good. 'Twas thus with Job, he was in a sorrowfull condition, but he believed a change was coming, and therefore he resolved. *All the daies of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come.*

Mmm

JOB

JOB Chap. 14. Vers. 15, 16, 17.

Thou shalt call, and I will answer thee: thou wilt have a desire to the work of thine hands.

For now thou numbrest my steps, dost thou not watch over my sinne?

My transgression is sealed up in a bagge, and thou sewest up mine iniquity.

IN the close of the 14th verse, we heard Job resolving to wait all the daies of his appointed time, till his change shall come: and according to the various interpretations of that change, opinions vary about the call and answer of this 15th verse.

Thou shalt call, and I will answer.

They who interpret that change by death, sence it thus, "when-
ever thou shalt send out thy writ, or summons to the grave, I
shall readily submit unto it and obey: thou shalt call and I will
answer; why should I be slow footed or faint-hearted, when I
am called to the grave? seeing I am assured, that I shall not be
lost in the grave; no nor forgotten there: though the grave be
the land of forgetfulnesse, thy affections towards me will pre-
serve thy memory of me; and seeing I live in thy love, I can-
not live out of thy thoughts: Thou wilt have a desire to the
work of thy hand.
Hence Observe,

That a godly man (in a due frame of spirit) willingly obeys the call of God to die.

The Apostle had not only a willingnesse, but a forwardnesse to die, even a zeal or a kinde of ambition to die, *I desire to be dissolved, and to be with Christ, which is best of all.* The Saints receive their call to death as a call to rest, and though the body for a while lie down in the dust, yet they know what is prepared for the soul, and when they two meet together again, both shall be called to an everlasting rest. Some interpret these words of *calling and answering*, by the common custome of inviting, and of the readinesse of those who are invited, to come unto a feast: How willing are we to feast with our friends? Saints never

*Si me voca-
ri que jubeas
paratus sum
Rab. Moyses.
Quum me vo-
cabit ad mi-
grandum ex
hac vita, ego
sibens tibi re-
sponderem.
Micr.*

never go to a feast indeed till they have done eating: the hunger of the soul after this feast conquers the fear of death. I grant there is a natural fear of death, and 'tis possible that a beleever who (in his own thoughts) hath often acted the dying man, may yet finde some regret and unwillingnesse to die when death comes: the very loosening of the bond, the untying of the marriage knot between soul and body, is unwelcome to nature, while grace bids it welcome. Paul did not so much desire to be unclothed as to be cloathed upon: he was willing rather that mortality should be swallowed by eternal life, then that natural life should be swallowed up by mortality. Yet at last faith conquers natural fear, grace laughs while nature mourns, and a beleever can with as much chearfulnesse answer the call of God to die, as the call of a friend to dinner when he is hungry, or to bed when he is weary.

Secondly, They who expound this *change* for that of the resurrection, give another meaning of this call and answer. As the former take it for a call to the grave, so these for a call from the grave, and his answer to be a willing return from thence: he would not let God call twice, much less demurre upon the matter, whether he were best come out of the grave or no. *Thou shalt call and I will answer, here I am, Lord, I come.* The Septuagint render *I will obey thy call.* In that day God will call, yea, he will make the greatest call that ever yet was made. *Then our God shall come, and will not keep silence, he shall call to the heavens from above; and to the earth that he may judge his people* (Psal. 50.3,4.) In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump, for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed (1 Cor. 15.52.)

And again, *The Lord himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the Archangel, with the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first,* (1 Thes. 4. 16.) he shall descend from heaven with a shout, with a loud exhortation, so loud that all who are in the grave shall hear him: the word in propriety signifies that encouraging voice, which is among mariners, or rowers in a galley, who are called with one consent to buckle to their oars: the Lord shall descend with a shout like that, and rouse the dead at once out of their graves. Bez.

In the parable of the Virgins, 'tis said, *at midnight there was a great cry, behold, the bridegroom cometh, go ye out to meet*

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him

him. (Mat. 25. 6.) This is not the cry of those who are called, (there will be a cry among them) but a cry from heaven calling them to meet the bridegroom. Christ speaks of two sorts of dead men, and of a twofold call to a twofold resurrection, Job. 5. *The hour is coming and now is when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live:* These are the dead in sinne, who are called to arise in newnesse of life, or to a new life, the life of grace: *Marvell not at this* (saith Christ) *for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the grave shall hear his voice, and shall come forth, they that have done good to the resurrection of life, and they that have done evill unto the resurrection of damnation.* As a great cry causeth the spirituall resurrection from sinne, so the corporall from the dust. Both are effects of the mighty power of God. When Christ raised *Lazarus*, he spake with a loud voice (Job. 11. 43.) *Lazarus come forth, Lazarus answered this voice and came forth.* And as he then, so all mankind shall hear and obey the voice of Christ commanding them to come forth. God calls now, and few will answer or obey: *O that my people had hearkned unto my voice,* (Pl. 81. 11.) God will at last speak so loud and so effectually, that the deafest Adders shall hear the voice of the charmer and appear out of their holes; The Lord commands the Prophet (Ezek. 37. 4.) *Son of man prophesie upon these dead bones:* he means it typically of the Jews in captivity, yet there the resurrection is shadowed: God will prophesie upon our dead bones: And if any ask, Can these bones live? yet these bones shall live. *God will lay sinews upon them, and he will bring up flesh upon them, and cover them with skin, he will put breath into them and they shall live.* Now a gracious heart answereth the call of God in the actings of a spirituall life (Psal. 37. 8.) *When thou shalt say seek my face, my heart answers, thy face Lord will I seek.* Then every man gracious or without grace, good or bad, shall answer the call of God to the receiving of another life: a life to some better then that they once lived, a life to most unconceiveably worse then the death from which they are called. *Thou shalt call and I will answer,* that's a second sense.

Thirdly, That change was interpreted by others for a change in his present state, from sickness to health, from pain to ease, from sorrow unto joy.

Hence

Thou wilt have a desire to the work of thy hand.

Which some conceive to be the very from of words in which Job intended to answer God: *Thou wilt call, and thus I will answer: O God, thou hast or thou wilt have a desire to the work of thy hand.* As if he should say, *When thou callest me, I know thy call must spring from the good will thou bearest me, thy affections will come forth to me, when thy voice comes forth, thou wilt therefore speak because thou hast a desire to the work of thy hand;* so the words stand in opposition to those (chap. 10. 3.) *Is it good that thou shouldst despise the work of thy hand?* Which some expound as his expostulation with God, upon an apprehension that he slighted him; but now he is confident God hath another opinion of him, and would be so far from despising, that he will have a great desire to him who was the work of his hand.

Secondly, Many of the Hebrew writers expound Job, as if he thought God had a minde or a purpose to destroy the work of his hand: and they read it with an interrogation, *Wilt thou desire or be forward to destroy that which thou hast made?* Hence also the Septuagint render it as a deprecation, *Do not reject or unmake the work of thy hands.*

Thirdly, The Originall word which we translate, *Thou wilt have a desire*, imports a strong covering desire, such as is after silver. The same root in the Hebrew signifies silver and to cover, because silver is so much coveted; *thou wilt have a desire to the work of thy hand.* As a covetous worldling hath a great desire after gold or silver, he longs for it, and it pleaseth him when he can get it, so the Lord himself hath a longing, covetous desire after man, who is the work of his hand. The Lord seemed to use Job as if he were but rubbish and dross, no way desirable, yet he believed God would look upon him as a silver vessel, and as a vessel of honour: The Vulgar Latine translates wide from the letter of the Hebrew, but near to this sense; *Thou wilt put forth thy right hand to the work of thy hand*; this departs from the letter of the words, but the sense is fair to the scope of the words; for it is an argument of love and friendship; to put forth the right hand to a man, if we meet one whom we love and delight in, we cannot passe him, without taking him by the hand; And is as an argument of love and friendship to salute with the hand, so

*Numquid por-
dere desidera-
bis? Rab. Lev.*

Tadi ipya

xi ipan su mu

*ano mii. Ne
repellas odera
manuum tua-
rum. Sept.*

*desidera-
re, amare, hinc
momen argenti,
quod desidera-
bile est.*

*Operi manuum
suarum porri-
ges dextram,
Vulg.*

of

of charity or pity to reach out the hand: *Thou wilt have a desire,* may be well expreſſed thus, *thou wilt put forth thy hand to the work of thy hand, and help me up* when thou biddeſt me riſe. A true friend reacheth his heart out before he reacheth out his hand. God had caſt *Job* into the mire and ditch (as he ſpoke chap. 9.) yet he beleeves he would take him by the hand, and liſt him not only out of the ditch of affliction, but out of the grave of death.

Hence Obſerve,

First, That God bears much affection to man as he is the work of his hand.

It argued high diſpleaſure when God ſpoke thus againſt his people, *He that made them will not have mercy on them, and he that formed them will ſhew them no pity* (Iſa. 27. 11.) The mean-eſt creature in the world, is the work of Gods hand, and under that notion the deſire of his heart: it is natural to all men to love their own works: and it is the diſtemper of moſt men to overlove and doat upon, yea to be proud of the work of their hand: God hath a deſire to and a liking of all his works, (*Gen. 1. 31.*) when he had finiſhed that great ſtructure, that noble fabric of the world, he ſaw all that he had made, and he ſaw it with content. God did not make the world and then take Deu.
*Conſuevit a-
riſus oppoſito
opus manuum
ſuarum, ejuſ-
que videndi car-
pitare venire.*

a view of it; all was one act, yea, he ſaw the idra or platform of it in his own breaſt from eternity: but the Scripture ſpeaks thus to ſhew what price and value he put upon his work. And if the natural frame of man be ſuch as God hath a deſire to, and looks upon with delight, as it then came out of his hand in the firſt creation: what deſires hath God to the work of his own ſpirit in our hearts, which is the ſecond of the new creation? hath he not a deſire to the new creature, who hath a deſire to every creature? if he hath a deſire to the work of his power in creation, then much more to the work of his ſpirit in regeneration, which is the moſt beautiful peece of work which he ever made. Angels are excellent creatures being confirmed in holineſſe: the ſoul of a beleever formed up by grace, is a creature matching Angels. When *Stevens* face was full of beauty, the text ſaith, it did ſhine as the face of an Angel. If an Angel were corporal, he could not have more luſtre and beauty then *Stevens* face had. Every Saint hath a heart like the face of an Angel, full of divine beauties and glorious excellencies. To ſuch a work of God, how great a deſire hath God? *Daniel*

was

was called a man of desires by the Angell (*chap. 9. 23.*) we translate greatly beloved, but the Chaldee is, *Thou art a man of desires*: Though every beleever cannot be called a man of desires in Daniels height, yet every beleever is a man of desires, A man whom God desires. It is an honour to man to be desired among men (and those Princes died in dishonour, of whom the holy story saith, that they died undesired) but how great an honour is it to that man who lives desired of God, and (whereof Job was assured) to whom God will have a desire as to the work of his hands when he is dead!

Take this corollary from it.

If God hath a desire to the work of his hand, how should they who are the work of his hand have a desire unto him?

What desire should we have to God, who hath wrought us, when we hear that he hath a desire to us because he hath wrought us? Shall the potter have a desire to the clay; and shall not that clay (which hath desires) have a desire to the potter? One of the Ancients speaks passionately to this point: *I was made by thee O Lord, and my heart is restless till it return to thee*: the work should have a desire to the hands that made it, and that which hath received a being to the fountain of its being. Sinfull destempers cause us to depart from God, the work hath then no desire to the hand that made it. Holy actions are all from God, and they carry us back to God, from whom they are. A holy heart cannot but have a desire to God, the work of whose hands it is.

Thirdly, Job was in a very sad condition, when he spake this, he was pleading with God for a change, a change by death, he will needs die rather then continue such a life; The hand of God had cast him as low as man could be on this side the grave or hell: and he saith, *Thou shalt have a desire to the work of thy hand.*

Hence Observe,

Faith can discern some light of favour, some glimerings of love through the clouds of darkest dispensations.

It is the holy skill, the art of faith to make conclusions of life, in death, and of light in darknesse; *This is the right Logick of faith*: Faith can prophesie, and faith is a true Prophet, *thou wilt have desire*, he speaks of the time to come, The presumption of evill men prophesies sometimes, or dreams rather that God will

will have a desire to them; but faith makes sure prophecies, because 'tis bottomed upon the sure word of God, *Job* faith prophesied more then once. *He shall be my salvation,* (Chap. 13.) *I know that my Redeemer liveth, and I shall see him,* &c. (chap. 19.) Faith hath a quick eye, and sees good in the end from the beginning. Faith sees the movings of that holy concupiscible appetite in God towards poor sinners; when it feels nothing but the movings of his irascible appetite. While *Job* perceived wrath, or somewhat in the likeness of wrath mixt with the dealings of God towards him, he promised himself (and that not coldly but confidently) not only somewhat in the likeness of the favour of God towards him, but his real favour; *Thou wilt have a desire to the work of thy hand.*

But had not the Lord a desire to *Job* before? Was the spring of his affections shut up till that day should come? or was his love to him yet to begin? No, the love of God and his desires had flowed to him from everlasting; as whom he loveth he loveth to the end, so whom he loves he loved without beginning: but his love and his desires had been a little while hidden and (as some rivers) had run under ground. *Job* saw nothing in his latter days but the actings of his anger, and was sensible only of severity in his proceedings, as the complaint of the next words teacheth us.

Verse 16. *For thou numbrest my steps, dost not thou watch over my sinne?*

In this and the verse following, *Job* makes a patheticall comparison, between the present seeming rigour of Gods dealing with him, and that sweetnesse which he hoped to finde ere long or at the last: *Thou wilt have a desire to the work of thy hand, but now thou numbrest my steps.*

Two things are here to be opened.

First, What he means by his steps.

Secondly, What he means by Gods numbring his steps. *Job* speaks both by a figure.

By steps we are to understand his actions, all that he did, yea, all that he thought, his inward motions as well as his outward motions. So the Septuagint translates, *thou numbrest my meditations*, or, the workings of my heart. As the whole course of a man is called his way, so the severall actions of that course,

Conclusio pathetica ex comparatione severitatis iudiciorum Dei hoc docet sequens versu, cum infirmis omnium rerum creaturarum, | vers. 20, 21. nominatim verba hominis usque ad finem, | Jun. |
¶ grossus meos

intransigentia 70. studia sunt | mitur tropologicè pro actionibus cum anima, cum corpore,

*Gressus sunt
affectus &
actus quibus
animus homi-
nis incedit bo-
nis quidem ad
palmam malis
vero ad per-
nam.*
מדד est nume-
rare vel suppu-
tare. Hinc li-
bellus supputa-
torius.
*Numerare
gressus est stu-
diose aliquem
observare &
omnia ejus fa-
cta inquirere,
quod fere fit
hostili animo.*
Bold.
*Singula facta
mea recenset &
ad amussim
metiris.* Jun.

are his steps; holy actions are streight steps, and sinfull actions are uneven ones, *he went on frowardly in the way of his heart,* Isa. 57. 17. that is, in the way which his heart most delighted in, that was a crooked way, and such were his steps, such disorderly walkers use not to number their-own steps, but God doth.

Numbring the steps notes an exact account, and an accurate observation of our actions, we say of a man who goeth softly, *surely you tell your steps*, The Lord is said to number our steps, when he makes a strict inquisition concerning all our transactions, and sets down step by step, every passage of our lives, when he keeps (as it were) a *day-book* of all we doe, and records us to a word or thought. *David* speaks of his enemies, (*Psal. 56. v. 6.*) *they gather themselves together, they hide themselves, they mark my steps, when they wait for my soul:* that is, they mark every thing I doe or say: he that would be watch exactly were best to have an enemy to watch him: love makes us watchfull over one another, lest we take hurt; but malice makes a man observant enough of another to do him hurt: thus *David's* enemies were double diligent upon their watches, *they mark my steps, when they wait for my soul;* And again, (*Psal. 17. 11.*) *they compassed us in our steps, they have set their eyes bowing down to the earth.* It is an allusion (as I conceive) to hunters, who go poring upon the ground to prick the hare, or to finde the print of the hares claw, when the hounds are at a losse, and can make nothing of it by the scent. Thus his enemies cast about to finde where he had gone, or what he had been doing, that their b'oudhounds might follow the game with a fresh cry. So then, *thou numbreſt my steps*, is no more but this, whatsoever I doe or speak, thou art very curious and criticall in the observation of it; I will not stay in the enlargement of any points from these words, but referre to chap. 16. v. 14. where *Job* speaks the same sense, *If I sinne then thou markeſt me, &c.*

Only Note in passage.

First, *God knows all the motions of our hearts, and the actions of our lives.*

He that is unacquainted with our wayes, cannot number our steps: it is best for us to number our own steps, and to take heed to our own wayes, when we hear that God is so exact at it: it would make us cautious what we do, if we knew of a man who

who took notice of all we did.

Secondly, The person, *Job* was a holy man, whose steps God numbred, whence we may learn,

That God sees the sin of his own children.

Job was not of opinion that God sees no sinne in his children; he knew himself to be a childe of God, and he knew his steps were numbred, yea, and his sin watched over, as he speaks in the next clause.

Dost thou not watch over my sin?

Some render this as a prayer, *Do not keep my sins, or spare me my sins*, that is, doe not punish them: but this is inconsistent with the tenour of *Jobs* discourse, and so I leave it.

The letter of the Hebrew is, *Dost thou not keep or observe upon my sinne?* The sense is the same with what he said last, or we have here but an exposition of it. Some read it without an intereogation, *Thou watchest over my sinne*, in both there is an allusion to a severe creditour, who gives no day, but presently exacts the forfeiture or penalty of his bond. So the Septuagint render, *None of my sins passe thee*, thou takest notice of all to punish and bring me to judgement for them. Others translate, *Thou dost not wait, or expect at all upon my sin*. As if he had said, *as soon as ever thou hast seen one commit any sinne, thou laiest thy arrest and charge upon me, thou dost not give me time but callest me to a present account.*

We may here again note, the inspection or superintendency of God over the ways of man: he is so perfect a numberer, that he watcheth to number: he that will number how many steps another takes, had need watch him well. Let no man wonder that God numbred his steps, when he watcheth to number them: and indeed, it is as easie for God to see every sinne in us, as to see one sin; there is no difficulty to omniscieny, in knowing all things. Let this also be for our caution and admonition: if God watcheth over our sins, how should we watch over our selves? Christ gives this charge, *What I say to you I say to all, watch*: we must watch for our own outward safety, though God watcheth to save, his watchfulnesse is no plea for our carelesnesse: much more have we need to watch, lest we sin, because God watcheth to observe our sins. His watchfulnesse should provoke our carefulnesse. The Lord (as it were)

Parce peccatis meis, Vulg.
Hac orationis filo orationis non convenit.
Merc.
חשך
qd excubias agis super peccatum meum
verbum de verbo, Nec cu- bodis super peccatum meum.
Nec prateritis te ullum peccatorum meorum
70.
Verbum חשך pro expectare & differre cum magna parte Hebraeorum sumo. Merc.

watcheth advantages to bring evill upon them, who are not watchfull againſt evill (*Dan. 9. 14.*) Therefore hath the Lord watched the evill, and brought it upon us: they were not watchfull againſt the evill of ſinne, therefore the Lord watched to bring upon them the evill of puniſhment. Have not we cauſe to watch leſt we tranſgreſſe, when God watcheth to chaſten our tranſgreſſions? The Prophet *Ier. 20. 10.* complained, *All my familiars watched for my halting*: God (in a ſenſe) watcheth for our haltings. He doth not watch as wicked men doe, with a hope to ſee us halt, as the Prophet perſonates his unkind familiars there, ſaying thus among themſelves, or every man in his own heart, *Peradventure he will be enticed, and we ſhall prevail againſt him, and we ſhall take our revenge on him.* It pleaſeth wicked men to ſee the godly halt or ſtumble, much more to ſee them fall: God is infinitely above ſuch thoughts or deſigns, he watcheth for our haltings to make us know them, not to inſult over us for them. He watcheth for our haltings, not hoping to ſee us halt, but to prevent us from halting, or if we halt, then to preſerve us from falling. He at moſt watcheth for our haltings to correct us for them, not to take his revenge upon us for them. He watcheth us to make us watchfull.

There is a double watchfullneſſe which this ſhould leade us to.

First, A watchfullneſſe in reference to God.

Secondly, A watchfullneſſe in reference to our ſelves.

We ſhould watch, 1. What God doth. 2. What God ſaith. And we ſhould watch, 1. What we doe. 2. What we ſpeak. 3. What we think: Every thought; word and work muſt be accounted for, and brought to judgement: and therefore it is as much our wiſdome, as it is our duty to watch over them. *Thou watcheſt over my ſinne* (ſaith *Job*) And ſuppoſe God find his ſin, what will he do next? that *Job* ſeems to tell us in the next verſe. Our ſins are but traſh, yet *Job* ſuppoſed that God put his into a bagge; they are no treaſure, yet *Job* ſuppoſed, God ſealed up his ſins in a bagge, and leſt the ſeal ſhould not be ſtrong enough, he repreſents God ſowing up this baggefull of ſinne, ſuch were the apprehenſions of this ſorrowfull man.

Verse 17. *My transgressions are sealed up in a bagge, and thou sowest up mine iniquity.*

There are two expositions of these words.

First, That the *sealing of transgressions up in a bag*, implies the utter removing of transgression: as if they were sealed up never to be seen or brought forth any more: the word is used *Job. 9. 7. he sealed up the stars*; that is, he covers them with clouds and darknesse, or overcomes them with greater light. The clearnesse of the day seals up the stars alwaies, and so doth the cloudinesse of the night sometimes. Some give this sense of the sealing here, *my transgressions are sealed in a bagge*, that is, they are hid, and shall not be remembered at all for ever. *Daniel* Prophecyng of the sufferings of Christ, saith, *chap. 9. 24. Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people, and the holy city to finish transgression*: The Chaldee word is, *to seal up transgression*: what that is, the next words shew, *and to make an end of sins, to make reconciliation for iniquity*, this was done by the death of Christ. The death of Christ was the death of sin, and when reconciliation is made for sin, the end of sin is made. This is a great Gospel truth, when sin is pardoned, it is sealed up so fast, that *when it comes to be sought for, it shall not be found, and when it is enquired after, it shall not be.*

*Elegant Ho-
braismus pro eo
quod est remissum
claudere, ut
nullo modo
eam videre aut
tangere liceat
Sigillare peccata
est eorum
memoriam pa-
nitus delere.*
Pined.

Yet I conceive it futes not this place, nor answers the subject upon which *Job* still insists, for he is aggravating the dealings of God with him, as severe, *he numbresth my steps*: So that to say *my transgressions are sealed up*, that is, they are pardoned and covered, is an exposition of so great a variation from the scope of *Jobs* discourse, as cannot be admitted in this place. Therefore to clear his meaning I shall offer that sealing is used in three cases.

First, To keep things secret that they may not be seen.

Secondly, To keep things distinct, that they may not be confused.

Thirdly, To keep things safe (as we usually speak) that they may be forth-coming.

When *Daniel* was cast in the Lions den (that he might be safe, not safe from the Lions, but safe, that none should fetch him out from the Lions, that there might be no delusion in the businesse,) 'Tis said *a stone was brought, and laid upon the mouth of the*

the

*Aufignate cellas referte an-
nulum ad me.*
Plaut. in
Casin.

*Qua fuit illa
priscorum vi-
sa? qualis in-
nocentia? in
qua nihil fig-
mabatur, &
nunc cibi qu-
que & potus
annulo vindi-
cant a rapina.*
Plin. lib. 32.
c. 1.

the denne, and the King sealed it with his own signet, chap. 6. 17. Seals were anciently put upon chests of goods, especially of their choicest goods. Pliny gives it as an argument of the integrity of the times before him, that then nothing was sealed up, servants might then (as we speak of those that are very trusty) be trusted with untold gold, but now (saith he) house-keepers secure their very meat and drink with seals, lest their servants should steal, and embezzle them. In allusion to this or that other service of the seal, Job saith here, my transgression is sealed, as if he had said, my transgression is kept safe, that it may be ready as matter of accusation and charge against me. In pursuance of which sense, some interpret these words as a metaphor taken from solicitors about law-suits, who carry their papers and bills of indite-ment sealed up and put into a bagge, which custome is continued at this day. As if Job had said, my inditement or charge is sealed up in thy bagge, surely thou intendest shortly to proceed to a tryal against me. When God tels the people of Israel, their vine is as the vine of Sodom, &c. he minds them presently, is not this laid up in store with me, and sealed up among my treasures? Deut. 32. 34. that is, this evil which you have done, the sins which you have committed, like Sodom and Gomorrhah, are laid up in store with me, and sealed among my treasures, I have taken sure notice of all, and shall bring all forth in due time: you have scattered your sins and wickednesses abroad, but I have gathered and sealed them up. God treasures up mercy for an obedient people, but he treasures up wrath for the rebellious. Or if God should not do it, yet such doe it for themselves Rom. 2. 5. Despiseest thou the riches of his goodnesse and forbearance, not knowing that the goodnesse of God leadeth thee to repentance? but after thy hardnesse and impenitent heart, treasurest up unto thy self wrath against the day of wrath. As impenitence seals our sins upon us, so it treasures and seals up the wrath of God upon us for our sins. The iniquity of Ephraim is bound up, his sin is hid Hos. 12. 13. from whom was it hid? not from the eyes of God (possibly not from the eye of the world) but it is bound up and hid, as reserved to a day of reckoning. It is bound up, not let loose by pardoning grace, it is hid, not with a covering of mercy, but with a covering from mercy, it is hid, not for protection, but (as Job thought his sinne was sealed) for punishment.

My transgression is sealed up in a bag.

Further, This *sealing up in a bagge* is an elegancy heightning the sense: A man counts or tels over his spending mony, but when he seals it up in a bag, it is an argument he means to lay it by as a stock. A stock of mony is not scattered about, but put in a bag, and when it is in the bag, it is not only tyed but sealed up. Thus *Job* seems to conceive that God had taken a note of all his sins, and laid them up till a fit time, to call him to an account about them, and punish him for them.

And thou sowest up mine iniquity.

Job prosecutes the same metaphor, and hath the same mind in this, as in the former part of the verse.

The words undergo different readings, some thus, *thou sowest iniquity to iniquity*, the Original signifies to join, or, to make an application of one thing to another, like an artificer who puts peece to peece in any fabrick. In which sense *Job* saith of his friends, *Ye are forgers of lies* chap. 13. 4. that is, you curiously frame up a lie, or put one lie to another, *Psa.* 119. 69. *The proud have forged a lie against me: so, thou sowest iniquity to iniquity*, the iniquity of one year to the iniquity of another, the iniquity of one relation to the iniquity of another: this is a sowing, or joyning of iniquity. Others thus, *Thou sowest to mine iniquity*, that is, thou sowest the punishment of iniquity to my iniquity, thou addest affliction to my sin: *Job* thought God heaped all his sins upon him together, and with them the punishment of all his sins. Again, *Thou sowest up mine iniquity*, is but an explication of *thou hast sealed up my transgression in a bagge*, or, the bagge of my transgression is not only sealed but sowed.

Hence Observe,

A gracious heart looks upon his own sinnings, as the occasion of his sufferings.

He fears there is somewhat in deck against him. And tis a truth, that as God hath a bottle wherein he puts the tears of his afflicted people, so he hath a bagge wherein he puts the sins of an offending people. God puts none of the sins of his people in a bag to condemn them, yet he often puts their sin in a bag to chasten them. Hence a godly man is apt to judge all his afflictions as the fruit of his sins: and though it was not so in *Jobs* case,

caſe, yet, he good man put all upon his ſin. It is good to judge our ſelves when we are judged (that is chaſtened) of the Lord.

*Fallitur hac in
re Jobus non
eſſe haſt affli-
ctioſes pana
peccati ſed fidei
probationes
quod Dei con-
ſilium non ſa-
tis intelligebat
Job. Druf.*

Secondly, Though this be a truth in general, yet *Job* is not to be excuſed in having ſuch dark thoughts of God, and ſuch black thoughts of himſelf, That ſurely *God ſealed up his iniquities in a bag*, and was reſolved to afflict him for them. *Job* miſtook his own condition, and the mind of God towards him in ſome things, as well as his friends did. God had not ſealed up his tranſgreſſions in a bag, but he had caſt them behind his back. God did not afflict him for the puniſhment of his ſin, but for the proof and exerciſe of his graces, as hath been ſhewed all along. *The holieſt man on earth is ſubject to miſ-conceive the reaſon why he ſuffers, as well as the rule of what he ſhould do.*

Thirdly. Obſerve,

That though a gracious heart will not bear the heard cenſures of others about his ſins, yet he is ready enough to cenſure and accuſe himſelf.

Job did as often confeſſe his iniquity before God, as he had pleaded his innocency before men. He would not have taken it well at the hands of his friends, if they had told him that God had filled a bag with his tranſgreſſions, and that God had ſealed it up againſt a day of account, yet thus he ſpeaks of himſelf. As his faith appeared little while he thought that God had ſealed up his tranſgreſſions, ſo his humility and ſelf-abate-ment appeared very great in this acknowledgement of his tranſgreſſion.

*Non eſt pec-
catum ex igno-
rantia vel in-
firmiſſe.*

*Non adixit
eſt diſſenſio ju-
ſti & injuſti.*

*Ubi quando
peccatum fit ex
designatione*

*parendi vel ex
amore licencie.
Auguſt. Confeſſe*

Further, *Job* imploies three words in theſe two verſes about the ſame thing, the acknowledgement of his ſinfulneſſe, 1. Sin, 2. Tranſgreſſion. 3. Iniquity. Theſe are taken ſometimes promiſcuouſly, as was ſhewed chap. 13. 23. here we may give them a diſtinct ſenſe.

The Firſt ſignifies properly a failing through ignorance or infirmity, a ſtepping out of the way beſides our intention, (poſſibly) againſt our full reſolution.

The ſecond ſignifies a diſſent from, or diſlike of that which is juſt and right.

The third imports rebellion, and prevarication, when we ſinne ſcorniſh obedience, or judging it a thing below us. One of the Antients confeſſes of himſelf, that when he was (in his youth)

youth) admonished by his mother to take heed of sinful ways, and to walk with God, he was ashamed to follow her counsel: This is rebellion indeed, and the height of iniquity; it is bad enough to do ill, but it is worse to be ashamed to do good, worst of all to be ashamed to leave off doing evil. Job chargeth himself with sin, transgression and iniquity, not with all of them in their full extent and aggravations, but with all of them in their kind.

Hence Observe,

That a godly man is subject to all sins, even the worst of sins.

Not only to sins of infirmity but of prevarication, not only to sins of ignorance, but to sins against knowledge: he may sin, not only because he cannot discern the rule clearly, but even against a clear rule. There is no sin but a regenerate man may fall into, except that from which no man can be raised, the sin against the holy Ghost. Now as the best discover somewhat in them productive of the worst sins, so God hath discovered himself ready to pardon the worst of sins: if we commit transgression, iniquity and sin, he proclaims himself, *the God pardoning iniquity, transgression and sin*, yea, his nature is infinitely more ready to pardon, than our nature is to sin. We should fear to commit the least sin even a sin of infirmity, but we need not fear whether God will pardon (for he certainly will) more than sins of infirmity, even the greatest sins. And though now not only our iniquities and sins, but even our least transgressions or steppings aside are sealed and sowed up in a bag, yet believers shall shortly see all their sins, bag and all thrown into the bottome of the sea, and sinking like a talent of lead or a weighty millstone in those mighty waters of free grace and undeserved mercies.

JOB Chap. 14. Verſe 18, 19, 20, 21, 22.

And ſurely the mountain falling cometh to naught, and the rock is removed out of his place.

The waters wear the ſtones, thou waſteſt away the things which grow out of the duſt of the earth, and thou deſtroieſt the hope of man.

Thou prevaileſt for ever againſt him, and he paſſeth, thou changeſt his countenance, and ſendeſt him away.

His ſons come to honour, and he knoweth it not, and they are brought low, but he perceiveth it not of them.

But his fleſh upon him ſhall have pain, and his ſoul within him ſhall mourn.

*Mirum eſt au-
dire Jobum in
mediis arumnis
Philoſophan-
tem. Olympe.*

IN this context Job give us a proof that he had not loſt his Philoſophy, much leſſe his grace in a ſick bed. An interpreter breaks out into admiration, that a man diſtreſſed with ſo many troubles, ſmitten with ſo many ſores, grieved with ſo many pains, could intend his thoughts ſo much about the ſecrets of nature, and the providential tranſmutations of the creature: that he who had been confined ſo long to a chamber, could travel thus in his thoughts for illuſtrations of his own caſe over mountains and rocks, among ſtones and trees, through the windes and waters.

The 18th and 19th verſes are a collection of compariſons for this purpoſe.

The words are plain, but there is much variety of judgement about their ſcope and Jobs intendment in them.

Some conceive that under theſe ſimilitudes he bewails the laſtingneſſe and long continuance of his ſorrows, or rather that he laſted and continued ſo long in his ſorrows: As if he had ſaid, *The ſtrongest peeces of the lower world are eaten out by time or forced into a decay by outward violence: mountains and rocks cannot ſtand their ground when the earth ſhake: The hardeſt ſtones cannot ever contend with the ſmalleft droppings, nor can the deepeſt roots hold their poſſeſſion againſt an overflowing deluge: all theſe are ſubject*

unto change, when thou assaulted: how is it then that I subsist under so many sorrows; and yet bear such burdens of affliction, who am neither mountain, nor rock, nor stone, nor tree? how is it that I am not wasted and removed by this tempest of thine anger, and quite washed away with these inundations of thy displeasure? Surely if I had been a mountain I might have been pulled down before this time, had I been a rock, these strokes and diggings might have undermin'd me, had I been a stone these continual droppings might have worn me out, and bow green and flourishing sooner I had been, these floods might long since, not only have discoloured but drowned all my beauty. Thus he argues from the greater to the lesse, if such robustious creatures fall and fail by these accidents; whence was it that he who was but weaknesse had held out so long? how was it that he (almost a dead man at first) did yet live in the midst of so many deaths? Hence

Secondly, Others conceive, that Job under these similitudes, renews his old suit to die; As if he had said, "There is nothing so firm, nothing so strongly settled, but must yeeld at last unto corruption, and change its state: therefore let my change come. Let me by removed, for rocks must remove, let me be consumed, for mountains must consume: Stones wear and trees are washed away, let me be worn and wa'st out of the world, let me passe away and die."

Thirdly, That Job doth here move the Lord to pity him, and hasten his release, suspecting that at the last he might break out into some impatience, or discover uncomely passions: As if he had said, "Lord, mountains cannot stand always, and rocks will fall at last; how much sooner may my patience? My strength is not the strength of stones; (as he spake, chap. 6. 12.)"

Fourthly, All these similitudes are conceived to aim at the same point, which Job had been upon a little before, namely, to shew that man dying shall return no more to his former state, as was there opened. Death giveth us such a wound as shall never be healed here; it is an irreparable losse of our worldly comforts. This he shadows out by mountains, rocks, stones, trees and fruits of the earth, which are changed and consumed, as if they had never been: Thus in general, I shall now open the distinct parts of these comparisons.

And against this second, his want of patience, he saith, I know not how much longer I can stand, yet will I not be weary of thee, O Lord. Verse

Verse 18. Surely the mountain falling cometh to nought, and the rock is removed out of his place.

Here are two similitudes, Some read, surely the high mountain or highest mountain cometh to nought; for the Hebrew word *נֹפֶל* here used signifies not only to fall, but to be very high and great, so high and great, that a man beholding it or looking down from it is giddy and falls for fear. Hence Gaias (*Gen. 6.*) are called *Nephilim*, which properly signifies *Fallers*; not because they fall, but because they make others fall: yet they being so high or men of such stupiduous limbs and stature, others seeing them, tremble and fall before them; So here, for the mountain falling, we may read, the high and huge mountain, the gigantic mountain, the mountain above ordinary mountains, as much as the giant is above the ordinary pitch of men; As if Job had said, the highest mountain come to nought; he speaks not of annihilation, but alteration, they moulder and break, they are not what once they were.

נָבֵל *proprie significat illum defluxum deciduorum foliorum ex arbore cum marcescunt ex ulso humore.*

The word which we translate *cometh to nought*, signifies properly to wither as a leaf, or to fall as a withered leaf: when the sap or moisture of the tree goes down to the root, then the leaves fall off. Thus (saith Job) the great mountains, the huge giantly mountains come to nought, they wither, they fall off like leaves in Autumn: the Prophet *Isaiah* praieth (*chap 64. 1.*) *JO* that thou wouldest bow the heavens and come down; that the mountains might flow down at thy presence: by mountains he means the greatest worldly powers, not natural, but metaphorical mountains: yet it is a truth in the letter, for if the Lord do but bow the heavens and shew his power, if he bow the heavens and comes down in the greatness of his strength, then the hardest mountains like the liquid waters shall flow down at his presence.

And the rock is removed out of his place.

נִסְתָּר *constituitur*

מִן הָאֵרֶץ *remota sit.*

A rock is harder then a mountain, a mountain is earth heaped together, but a rock is earth hardened together: but though it be not only a mountain, but a rock, yet, though it be a mountain of rocks, remove it shall.

The word signifies properly to wax old, because things that wax old are removing and passing away; Hence the same word signifies

signifies to wax old and to be removed, that's the Apostle description of a thing that waxeth old; (Heb. 8. 13.) *that which decayeth and waxeth old, is ready to vanish away*; he speaks to a spiritual point, yet from a maxim in nature. Such is the rock is removed out of his place, is the same with, the rock waxeth old, because that which waxeth old is ready to be removed out of his place. From these two similitudes,

Observe First, *that no creature is so strong or firm, but is subject to change.*

There is no creature so strong or firm, but is subject to change. The mountains and the rocks change continually by the power of time, how much more when God contends with them by an extraordinary power? The Prophet Nahum speaks this in highest Rhetorick (chap. 1. 4, 5, 6.) *he rebuketh the sea, and maketh it dry.* (If any thing keep water, it is the sea, which is the greatest vessel prepared on purpose by God to keep the waters, yet God can lade the ocean with the hollow of his hand and dry, not only a pond or a river, but the sea. *He rebuketh the sea, and maketh it dry.*) *Babylon languisheth and Carmel, and the flower of Lebanon languisheth, the mountains quake at him, the hills melt, and the earth is burnt at his presence, yea the world and all that dwell therein, them who can stand before his indignation, and who can abide in the fierceness of his anger? his fury is poured out like fire, and the rocks are thrown down by him.* This piece of Nahum's prophecy is a clear commentary upon the text of Job, what can be said more, and nothing less deserves to be said, either of the infirmity of the strongest creatures, or of the omnipotency of the God of strength. He tosseth the hills like tennis-balls, and cracks the rocks like a nutshell, before him the hills melt, and the foundations of the earth are discovered. The creature with change by reason of its own weakness, though God should not exert or put forth his power against it. Every mixt body hath the seed of corruption in it, and therefore must corrupt naturally, though God should not destroy it providentially or judicially: Now if these creatures are changeable in themselves, surely when God changeth them they shall be changed: all creature strength must yield to his strength whose weakness is stronger than all creatures. If God send out a commission against a mountain, it falls and must come down, if he bids a rock remove, the rock shall be removed: if God say to the wind, blow away

away that mountain, or to a tempest, blow down that rock, it shall be done, stormy windes and tempests go presently upon his errand and fulfill his word. Faith is said to remove mountains, but it is only up on this account, because it engages the power of God, who alone can do it. Secondly Observe, (which is also applicable to the other similitudes.)

That the strongest creatures reade man a lecture of his weakness.

When Job would shew man his frailty, he sends him to the mountains and rocks, which are the most durable among earthly substances: the weakest creature is an embleme of mans weakness, and the strongest teacheth him, there is no trusting to his strength. As Solomon send the sluggard to the gismire, saying, consider her ways and be wise, so we may say to the strong man, to the confident man, to the prodd man, to all who think they shall never be removed, go to the mountains, repair to the rocks and be wise, go to the stones which wear away with water drops, go to the trees which are rooted up by a deluge of waters: go to these and learn the vanity and mutability of your best estate. We may learn of that which cannot speak, things insensible may reason, the murrer with us: they have a voice though not a tongue to tell us what we are. For as the invisible things of God, so wit his eternal power and Godhead are seen in the things which are made, so the invisible things of many even his temporal weakness and frailty are seen in the things which decay since their making. The power of God is invisible, and so is much of the weakness of man. The constitution of the creature makes the former visible, and the corruption of it makes the latter visible. Every thing that man sees remembers him what he is, and what he must shortly be. And because our duty in this point is no burthen, Job gives further cautions. And as I have opened the former, so I shall now shew fairer instances; by which he confirms this truth, so yllaine shew it yorsh ton bloodi boe dyquait, yllar evelmeit ni, dekeynele ore comenore shid li wol. yllar merclit: yllar merclit weat the flamen's boumashf away the thinge at shonke the alow air of the dust of the earth, and then deserveth things noillanthe of man's boe il, comenore li nedi regneth - or doot a bid ed it, n'wob smos flum hie aint it, n'iaquom a wadil hawer se wo h'ave twid similitudes more together with the appli-

application of all the four, in those words, *Thou destroyest the hope of man*, in conjunction with the 20th verse, *Thou prevalest for ever against him, and he passeth, &c.*

The waters wear the stones. [Job. 14. 19.]

Waters are soft and liquid, yet they make impression upon that which is hard, and almost impenetrable: it is a proverbial speech, *water by continual running, or often dropping hollows and dents in stone*. This similitude intimates, that though Job's afflictions had been small or light, whereas indeed they were great and heavy, though they had been but as little drops whereas indeed they were a mighty deluge, yet their long continuance and frequent repetition, would utterly weaken and wear him out at last: *drapping will consume a stone.*

Gutta cavas lapidem. Ovid. lib. 4. de Ponso.

Hence Observe, *That continued and repeated acts though small, produce great effects.*

What single force doth not, many doublings of it will. Many lighter blows will kill as well as one great wound. A man may be whipt as well as club'd to death. He that goes but a little way in an hour goes a great way if he continue going many hours. A Student in any profession may have got so little learning by one days study, that he cannot perceive he hath got any, yet continuing to study he may attain the highest degree of learning. A beleever findes little or no growth in grace or in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, by some one exercise either in prayer or hearing the word, yet by a constant attendance upon the Lord in these duties, he grows to a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullnesse of Christ. Smallest sins lived in (which some do not so much as suspect to be dangerous) destroy the soul, as well as that (whatsoever it is) which is called by this name, *a sin unto death* 1 Joh. 5. 16. The greatest number is made up of conjoined unities. Here a little and there a little, comes to much. The mightiest oak is hewed down, and the strongest wall is undermined by many stroaks of the axe and mattock. A ship may be swallowed up with a multitude of little sands as well as broken upon a rock: you may make a burden of many feathers as well as of one masse of lead. A multitude in any kinde whether of actions, things, or persons, though inconsiderable apart, yet put together

ther or following each other close, will carry all before them, and overcome all difficulties. *The waters wear the stones.*

Thou wastest away the things that grow out of the earth.

Thou wastest who is that? the antecedent is God himself, *Thou* (O Lord) *wastest away the things*, &c. here Job expresseth the supremum efficient of all those alterations in the creature, who it is that puls down the mountains, that removes the rocks, all these changes are wrought by the power of God, *thou wastest away the things that grow out of the earth*, or, *thou bringest a deluge upon them*: God brought once an universal deluge, which washed away not only all that grew out of the earth, but all that lived upon the face of the earth. God hath given mankind his covenant, and set his bow in the cloud as a sign of it, that all flesh shall not be cut off any more by the waters of a flood, neither shall there any more be a flood to destroy the earth, (Gen. 9. 11.) yet God hath often since brought floods upon particular places and countrys, which have destroyed and washed away that which grows upon the face of the earth, as hearbs, grasse and trees.

The word strictly taken signifies only those things which grow naturally out of the earth without the labour of man, without plowing, digging, or sowing. So we finde the things that grow out of the earth distinguished (1 Kin. 19. 23.) *This shall be a sign unto thee, thou shalt eat this year such things as grow of themselves, and the second year that which groweth of the same, and the third year ye shall plant, and sow*: The Levitical Law mindes us also of this distinction, (Lev. 25. 5.) *that which groweth of its own accord of thy harvest thou shalt not reap*. As the Jews were forbidden to sow their field in the year of Jubile, so also to reap that (as a peculiar crop to any one of them) which grew up without their sowing. The standing corn (if it stand too long) sheds some grains, which spring up without plowing or sowing: This is said to grow of its own accord; yet (I conceive) we need not take it here in such a restrained sense, but in general, for all or every thing that groweth out of the dust of the earth, whether by or without the labour of the husbandman. *Thou wastest away the things that grow out of the dust of the earth*.
Hence Observe,

First, The same thing may be both a blessing and an affliction.

Things

נִבְדָּו germi-
na Pag. sponte
nascentia Va-
rab. Quae spon-
te fundis pulvis
terra. Com-
put.

Things grow out of the duſt of the earth, by water flowing out of the earth, or by the rain falling upon the earth from heaven, and yet the falling of the rain, and the flowing of the water, may deſtroy the things that grow out of the duſt of the earth: if the rain fall not on the duſt of the earth, nothing will grow. God threatens to make the rain of the land powder and duſt (*Deut: 28. 24.*) that is, to ſend ſo much drought, that the duſt ſhall riſe from the earth up into the air, and fall down upon the earth in ſtead of rain. Now when the rain is duſt, nothing will ſpring out of the duſt of the earth. The earth is barren, The earth opens its mouth, and gapes to heaven for rain (as a thirſty man) to make it fruitful: yet, this water, this rain which ſometimes is a great bleſſing to the earth, and cauſeth it to bring forth fruit abundantly, even this deſtroies the fruit of the earth: *too much of any thing in nature is hurtful*: there may be a too much of nature, but there cannot be a too much of grace: ſome things are ſo good that we cannot have too great a quantity of them. The dew and drops of heaven upon the ſoul in greateſt abundance will not deſtroy the things that grow in or out of our ſouls, but make them grow more. Our ſin and the wrath of God turn our greateſt worldly comforts into curſes: but that is alwaies a bleſſing to us which cures us of our ſin, and the more we have of it, the more bleſſings we alwaies have.

Secondly Obſerve,

The Lord who makes things to grow out of the earth, makes them wither.

He who giveth us the fruit of the ground, takes the fruit of the ground away: mercies and judgements come from the very ſame hand, and both from the hand of God; The Lord ſaith to the fields, encrease and multiply: his word, yea, his ſteps drop fatneſſe. Where God walketh in mercy, every ſtep he ſets is a drop of fatneſſe, and where he walks in anger, every ſtep he ſets is a drop of leanneſſe; he that makes the fields flouriſh, makes them droop, *he waſteth away the things that grow out of the duſt of the earth.*

Thou deſtroieſt the hope of man.

As if he had ſaid, *Thou who cauſeſt mountains to fall, and rocks to conſume, thou who cauſeſt ſtones to wear, and waſteſt away the things*

things that grow out of the earth, thou, even thou destroyest the hope of man: that is, in destroying these things, thou destroyest the hope of man, or, as thou destroyest these strong, durable and beautiful creatures, so the hope of man set upon any creature. The Hebrew particle (*Vau*) is often put as a note of likeness, *And thou destroyest*, is, so thou destroyest the hope of man.

But shall the hope of man be destroyed? what hope, and whose hope shall be destroyed? There is a hope of man stronger then the mountains, and more durable then rocks or stones. Though these consume and come to nought, yet that shall not. The hope of the Saints endures for ever, and they shall never be ashamed of their hope: their hope is an anchor (so the Apostle calls it, *Heb. 6.*) sure and steadfast: and as the hope of the Saints is a sure anchor, so it is fastened by such a cable as will never crack, let the winds blow and the wayes rise as high as they will. The word of promise is the cable which holdeth this anchor, that word of promise is stronger then a threefold cord, and cannot at all be broken.

Again, as this anchor is strongly fastned above, so it is let down upon and is fastened in a rock beneath. That anchor of hope will never dragge which falls into Christ, the cliffs of that rock hold it and will not let it goe. *It is impossible to destroy such a hope as this: The hope of Saints shall indeed be destroyed, or perished rather, by enjoyments, but it shall not be destroyed by disappointment.* When we enjoy all things, what need we hope for any thing? hope is swallowed up in fruition. *Saints never lose their hope till they have found all that they hoped for: If in this life only we had hope in Christ, we were of all men most miserable, 1-Cor. 15. 19.* We shall not hope any longer then we live here, but we have a hope of good beyond this life: our hope lasteth no longer then our lives, but the things we hope for, last longer then the mountains, yea, longer (as old Jacob speaks in his benediction upon Joseph) then the everlasting hills: our hope will last, that is, we have hope of that which will last as long as everlastingnesse.

Seeing then the hope of Saints is no perishing hope, whose hope doth Job mean, when he saith, *Thou destroyest the hope of man?*

He means the hope of vain men, or the vain hope of good men.

men. God deſtroieſh all the hopes of vain men, and all the vain hopes of any man, ſuch hopes as thoſe proud men had after the flood ſhall be deſtroied, who ſaid, *go to, let us build us a city and tower whoſe top may reach unto heaven, and let us make us a name; leſt we be ſcattered abroad upon the face of the earth.* (Gen. 11. 4.) God ſcatters their hopes, who by worldly power or policy, hope to ſecure themſelves againſt ſcattering: a hope to get our ſelves a name, and ſo to faſten our ſelves upon earthly foundations, as never to be removed, ſhall ſurely be removed. The Pſalmiſt diſcovered that the inward thoughts of covetous men are, *that their houſes ſhall continue for ever, and their dwelling places to all generations* (Pſal. 49. 11.) this is their thought and hope: God deſtroieſh ſuch hopes often, letting their houſes fall to the ground before themſelves fall into the grave: or if their outward glory outlive them, yet their poſterity ſhall outlive their glory, their ſons ſhall either wantonly ſcatter what they have miſerably gathered, and at laſt be eaten up with wants, or the wrath of God will ſcatter what the father gathered, and the ſon hath minde enough to keep. And as God deſtroies the hope of covetous men, that their riches ſhall abide, ſo the hope of voluptuous men, that their pleaſures ſhall be renewed; ſuch a hope the Prophet *Iſaiah* deſcribes, the idle, idol ſhepherds full of (*Iſa. 56. 12.*) when they ſay, *come ye, and I will fetch wine, and we will fill our ſelves with ſtrong drink, and to morrow ſhall be as this day and much more abundant.* The hoped for cup ſhall be pulled from their mouths, who do not drink for thirſt, but thirſt for a drinking.

Further, God deſtroieſh all their hopes who *hope in the arm of fleſh*. The Jews thought *Egypt* help enough againſt all enemies, even while they neglected to keep God their friend. But ſee how the Propheet reproves them or befools them for it: *Why gaudeſt thou about ſo much to change thy way? As if he had ſaid, When one worldly means fails thee, thy reſort is to another: if *Aſſyria* help thee not, thou art confident that *Egypt* will, but thou ſhalt be aſhamed of *Egypt* at thou waſt aſhamed of *Aſſyria*. That is, theſe hopes ſhall fail thee, and thy expectations, they ſhall be fruſtrate in the one as well as in the other. For God hath rejected thy confidences, and thou ſhalt not proſper in them,* (Jer. 2. 36, 37.) Thus God deſtroieſh the hope of vain men, and not only ſo, but

He destroyeth also the vain hopes of good men (tis possible for such to have vain hopes) hopes of long life, of prosperous daies, of riches, and of great things for themselves: They sometimes project as vainly as the world, and join with those in action, from whom they are separated by profession. The Lord in mercy blasteth these hopes of good men, that they may be taught to fix their hopes on better things. He shews how weak and withering the creature is, though in their hands, that their hearts may be wholly set on him. We enjoy God most, when we hope least in man, and God doth therefore destroy the vain hopes of some men, that they may enjoy himself more. As all the hope of hypocrites shall be destroyed, so shall some hopes of those who are sincere.

Thou destroyest the hope of man, that is, in destroying those things upon which man hopes, thou destroyest the hope of man: the act or habit of hope is often put for the object of it. Man hopes in mountains material and metaphorical, he trusts in the rocks and stones of the earth, or in the things that grow out of the earth, riches and plenty. All these things are destroyable, and when these are destroyed, the hope of most men is destroyed: if the matter upon which our hopes are fixed be perishing, our hopes shall perish: we cannot raise a safe or a firm building upon a rotten or an unsound foundation. Earthly things, the mountains of the earth cannot make a pillar to prop up the hope of man, when God will pull it down.

I have from former passages in this book shewed how great a possession hope is, and that even the light of nature in some hath preferred it before all their possessions. I have also shewed that it is the last peece which man quits the possession of in his greatest extremities, and that when that's gone, all is gone. Man hath nothing more to be destroyed, when once his hope is destroyed: if our hope be prevailed over, we are prevailed over for ever: *Jobs* discourse leads us to this conclusion in the next verse.

Verse 20. *Thou prevailsst for ever against him, and he passeth, thou changeest his countenance, and sendest him away.*

This verse explains the application of the similitude, when the Lord destroyeth the hope of man, he prevails against him for ever.

Thou

Thou prevaileſt for ever againſt him, and he perſeeth.

Thou prevaileſt] The word is, *thou waxeſt ſtrong upon* הוֹרַרְתָּ
him, or, thou art ſtronger then he; all prevailing proceeds *prevalere* or
from greater ſtrength, either of body or minde: equality makes *Mont fortior*
no conqueſt. And though (as *Hannah* ſings *1 Sam. 1. 9.*) by *eo fuisti. Pagn.*
ſtrength ſhall no man prevail, yet the ſtrength of God will pre-
vail. The reaſon why no man prevails by ſtrength, is, becauſe
God alone hath more ſtrength then all men put together, and
becauſe he hath, therefore he can prevail by his own ſtrength
over man, and that for ever.

Thou prevaileſt for ever againſt him.

The word which we tranſlate *for ever*, ſignifies alſo in the נצח *quod eſt*
verb to prevail, to triumph, or to overcome, thou waxeſt ſtrong *triumphare*
over him triumphingly and victoriously, or, thou triumpheſt *aut vincere i-*
over him, and thou ſhalt alwaies triumph over him. A triumph *demerſi quod a-*
is the ſignal of perfect victory, and where victory is perfect, it *liquid ad finem*
is victory for ever: God prevails ſo over man that he may tri- *victorioſe &*
umph, and therefore he is rightly ſaid to prevail triumphantly, *triumphanter*
or to prevail for ever. *perducere.*

Thou prevaileſt for ever, which may be underſtood two
waies.

First, That, man is ſo prevailed upon, that, he cannot repair
himſelf again. If God break down, man cannot build up, and
if he wound, man cannot heal: both breach and wound muſt
continue for ever, unleſſe the ſame hand that made them make
them up again.

Secondly, That, how often ſoever God taketh man in hand,
he is ſure to carry the day againſt him, *he prevaileth for ever.*
God is alwaies armed with ſufficient ſtrength to ſubdue all
ſtrength unto himſelf. Nor can we ſurprize God or come upon
him, before he hath drawn out his ſtrength and made it ready.
He muſt be a perpetual Victor or Triumpher who hath alwaies
ſtrength enough to get the Victory, and whoſe ſtrength is al-
waies ready enough to go to battle. There was never any man
alwaies a conquerour, but God is. Men have been mighty con-
querors, and have had conquerour juſtly affixed to their titles,
yet not one of theſe was alwaies a conquerour, the beſt of men
have been ſometimes worſted, or could not prevail; Only God

Pre-

prevaileth ever. If he undertake a work or a design, whether for or against man, he will be sure to have his ends: for nothing can stand in his way: All that is in the way is of his own setting, and he is wiser then to set any thing in his way, which shall hinder him in the bringing about his own ends. What strength soever the creature hath, it hath from God, and surely he hath not given out more then he keeps to himself. He will not be mastered with his own gifts, nor make derivative power too strong for original power. Indeed all the power which God gives is weaknesse, and the wisdom fully, compared with that he keeps: and what is weaknesse to omnipotency? what is folly to wisdom? what is mortal and changeable to eternal and unchangeable, that it should hinder its prevailing?

*Rotorasti enro
paululum, ut
in perpetuum
transiret.
Vulg.
-- tollitur in
alium,
-- ut lapsu
graviores ruant.*

The Vulgar reads differently, referring this act of prevailing, not to the strength of God prevailing over man, but to the bounty of God giving man strength to prevail: *Thou hast strengthened him for a little while, that he might passe away for ever.* As if God exalted man only to cast him down with a more fearfull ruine: or, as if Job had said, *Thou didst heretofore strengthen me, but now thou abatest my strength; I was once set up, but now thou tramplest me under foot.* 'Tis I grant the design of God against his enemies to advance them on purpose that he may overthrow them with greater advantage. Thus the Lord said of Pharaoh, *for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee,* (Rom. 9. 17.) But God deals not thus with his own servants, for though he gives them strength and then tries them, yet he never gives them strength that he may (with a greater reputation to his own strength) triumph over them. And therefore I lay this translation aside, and embrace our own, as clearest to the intendment of these similitudes: *thou prevailsst for ever against him.*

And he passeth. That is, he dieth, so the word is used (chap. 10. 21.) death is our passage out of the world, we come in and we passe out: man must passe when God giveth him a passe to travel out of the land of the living.

Thou changeſt his countenance, and ſendeſt him away.

This change of his countenance is taken three waies.

First,

First, Some understand it of the habit of a dying or dead man: Death brings a change upon the whole man, eſpecially upon the face or countenance: both the beauty and the feature of the face change at the appearance of death: fairneſſe is then turned into paleneſſe, ſweetneſſe into ſwarthyneſſe. The noſtrils are ſharp, the eyes hollow, the ears are ſhrunk, and the jaws fallen: the dead man looks not like himſelf, nor like the man he was, when he was healthy and alive. Phyſicians give us the deſcription of that change, and teach us to ſpell the letters, and read the characters of death printed upon the face. Death ſends its image as a harbinge to take up every room of our bodies, before it ſelf comes to lodge in our bodies. Strangers may ſee death in their ſick friends, long before their ſick friends feel it.

Nividum & viridum vultum cum luto do & pallens commutatur.
In morte tota facies redditur ſibi contraria.
Acutus enim ſe naſu, oculi cavi, tempora collapſa aures contracta, &c. ut docet. Hipp. lib. præn.

Hence Obſerve,

Death ſheweth the beauty and dark blaſt the comelineſſe of

How much ſoever any glory in the beams of beauty now, ſickneſſe will ſhortly eclipse and death will totally darken it. Spiritual beauty will never change, but for the better: the countenance of the ſoul adorned with grace changeth into glory, when a believer dies: Soul-beauty will be more beautiful, and attain its full perfection, when bodily beauty is none at all, but is turned into corruption: when the frame of nature is ruined in us, the frame of grace ſhall be compleated in us; And we ſhall be all glorious within, when there is no glory left without. *Thou changeſt his countenance.*

Secondly, *This change of the countenance* is expounded not for that inſtantaneous change, which death brings into the body, or not for that only, but for that continual change which man is ſubject to in his body while he lives: the countenance is put for the whole outward man. Death is our moſt remarkable change, but it is not all our change: Every day carries away ſome ſpoils of beauty and ſtrength from the ſtrongest and moſt beautiful body. No day looked upon us or we upon it with the ſame face.

Thirdly, Others take the countenance more largely, not for the face or whole body only, but for the whole ſtate of a man: it is uſual to apply the word *face* or *countenance* to all changes: we ſay *there is a new face of things*, or of affairs, when affairs whether

— Nulla non dies formoſi ſpectum corporis abſtulit. Sen. in Hypol.
Mihi friget iſte ſenſus, melius omnino hanc faciem interpretari poſſumus gentilem ſuarum rerum ſtatum. Bold.

per-

personal or publick are much changed. As if he had ſaid, *Thou changeſt his whole ſtate and ſendeſt him away: becauſe all changes appear in the face, therefore in whatſoever our change is, 'tis ſaid our face is changed.*

Man hath one face in riches, and another in poverty, one in honour, another in diſgrace: The copy of a mans countenance changeth, not only as his body, but as his condition and relations change. You may ſee how it is with us in our faces: For, as our conditional countenance changeth, ſo doth our personal. 'Twas ſhewed at the ſecond verſe of this chapter, that man continueth not in any condition alwaies the ſame: his natural, his civil, his ſpiritual eſtate, are liable unto changes: what they are, I refer the Reader back to the verſe mentioned; *Thou changeſt his countenance,*

And ſendeſt him away.

*Ablegas eum
hinc non redi-
turum, velut
extrudis & a-
mandas eum
ex hoc ſeculo
proſus. Merc.*

He ſaid before, *he paſſeth away*: here he varies the phraſe, *thou ſendeſt him away*, that is, he dieth, there's the end of all. Man hath many changes while he lives, and ſhortly he muſt change from life to death: the manner of expreſſing it is conſiderable.

Thou ſendeſt him away.

Man dieth by diſpatch from God, God ſends him a writ to die, *Thou ſendeſt him away*. Death is mans diſmiſſion out of the world. The word imports a ſpecial direction, When Adam had ſinned the Lord God ſent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground; from whence he was taken, (Gen 3.23.) He bid Adam be gone out of the garden, and he bids the ſons of Adam be gone out of the world. Old Simeon ſaid, *now let thy ſervant depart in peace, give me my diſmiſſion or my writ of eaſe*. God ſends wicked men away, whether they will or no: Saints would be ſent away and depart with leave. Wicked men are put out of the world, as the leprous perſon was put out of the camp of Iſrael, leſt he ſhould infect others. Godly men are ſent out of the world, when they have done the errand they came about for the good of others. *Thou ſendeſt him away.*

Verse 21. *His sons come to honour and he knows it not, they are brought low and he perceiveth it not.*

His sons come to honour.

Some refer it to number, *his sons are multiplied*, others to riches, *his sons get wealth*, we to greatnesse, *his sons come to honour*. Some are born to honour, and others come to it, some receive it from their parents, others get it by their achievements, it runs to some in their blood, others rise to it by their vertue and worth, by their parts and abilities: 'Tis better to get honour then to have honour, and to make our selves honourable, then to be made honourable. It is easie to inherit honour, but it is hard to attain honour. *His sons come to honour*,

Cum multi fuerint filii ejus nescit suam autem pauci fuerint ignorat, Sept. ככר pondus & gravitatem hinc honorem divitias, &c. denotat.

And he knows it not.

An act of knowledge is often put for an act of the affection: we are said not only not to know that which we are ignorant of, but that which we are regardlesse of: so here, he knows not when his sons come to honour, that is, he is not affected with it; Usually a parent knows nothing more, then the preferment of his children, and he seldom studies any point more. *Job* describes a father ignorant or insensible of his sons preferment. And as he knows not the good which his sons come to, so not the evil which comes upon his sons, as he tels us in the next words.

And they are brought low, or diminished:

They are diminished in number, but few are left: or, they are made low and poor in state, there is but little left to them.

And he perceiveth it not.

That is, he is not grieved at it; But who is this insensible ignorant father? or what is it that renders him thus ignorant and insensible, of all the providences of God, whether good or bad to his own bowels?

Some expound both clauses of a dead father, *thou sendest him away*, he dies, and then *his sons come to honour*, and *he knoweth it not*, &c. A dead man hath no knowledge at all of what is done among the living: They that are out of the world perceive not what is done in the world, no not with those that are nearest

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and

and dearest to them, their own sons; And as they have no knowledge of, so no affections to the world, the dead neither rejoice with nor mourn over those that live. *Solomons* description of an Atheist, and of his false conceits about death, may (though not in his sense) be applied for the illustration of this truth (*Ecc. 9. 5, 6.*) *The living know they shall die.* Atheists speak thus, not from a certainty of knowledge causing them to prepare for death, but from a carelessness mixed with their knowledge, causing them to slight death: they know they must die, and therefore care not though they die. Death (say they) befalls all, and therefore should not trouble any. This is all the care they take about death, when they profess their knowledge of death. *The living know they shall die, but the dead know not any thing.* The Atheist speaks it downright, as if when a man dies there were an end of him. He knows no more, that is, (in their divinity) he is no more. But though the dead in Christ know many things, they know their own happiness and eternal life; and though the dead who die out of Christ know many things, they know their own torment and misery, they know also the falseness of this opinion, that the dead know nothing: yet there is a truth in what they say, though not in what they mean. For the dead know not any thing of this present life, or of the things done here on earth. They know not any thing of these things, as knowing is taken for apprehending, and they know nothing of them, as knowing is taken for grieving at, or rejoicing in them; so the Preacher speaks at the sixth verse, in the language of his Atheist still: *also their love, and their hatred, and their envy is now perished, and they have no more portion for ever in all that is done under the sun.* They therefore have no love nor hatred, nor envy about those things that are doing under the Sun, because they have no portion in all that is done under the Sun. When man dies he hath a portion, but it doth not lie under the Sun. Wicked men have their portion with hypocrites and unbelievers. The godly have a portion with Christ, and all the Saints in glory: as for earthly things they are none of their portion, and therefore none of their care, and they have as little affection about them as they have use of them, their sons come to honour and they rejoice not, their sons are made low and they grieve not. The Prophet *Ezekiel* praises earnestly (*chap. 63. 16.*) *Look down (O Lord) from heaven, and behold from the habitation of thy*

thy holineſſe and of thy glory, where is thy zeal and thy ſtrength, the founding of thy bowels and of thy mercies towards me? are they reſtrained? Doubtleſſe thou art our Father, though Abraham be ignorant of us, and Iſrael acknowledge us not: that is, as ſome expound the place to the point in hand: Though Abraham and Iſrael our forefathers are ſo far from being able to relieve and deliver us out of our troubles, that they are utterly unacquainted with them, yet we are aſſured thou knoweſt what our troubles are, and art able to relieve us. Though Abraham and Iſrael our deſcended forefathers have no zeal, nor any founding of bowels, that is, pity and compaſſion towards us their bowels, though they are not grieved becauſe we are made low, yet Lord, thou liveſt for ever, and ſo do thy zeal and compaſſions to thy people, therefore look down from heaven and help us. There is another expoſition of the Prophet, which gives the ſenſe as a prevention of an objection againſt the former petition; why ſhould you expect to be heard though you are the children of Abraham and Iſrael, when your walk is ſo unanswerable to that of Abraham and Iſrael, that if they were alive again here upon the earth, they would not own nor acknowledge you as their children? To this the Prophet is conceived to answer, let it be granted or confeſſed that we are a people ſo degenerate that even our forefathers, if they were ſent among us from the dead, would not own us for their children, let it be granted that we are unworthy in our ſelves to be counted Abrahams children, yet through thy free grace we may be numbred among thy children. Doubtleſſe thou art our Father though Abraham be ignorant of us. Thy love changes not though the love of men doth, thou wilt not caſt us off though Abraham do: This is a very ſpiritual interpretation, nor is it inconſiſtent with the former, we may join both together thus, If Abraham were alive he (poſſibly) would neither own nor help us, we are ſo ſinful: But Abraham is dead, and doth not ſo much as know that we want help, therefore Lord look down from heaven and help us thy ſelf: Abrahams bowels are not moved towards his ſons, *O let not thine be reſtrained.*

Let this admoniſh parents who take inordinate and immoderate care, by right or wrong to advance their children: Some live miſerably that their children may flouriſh, yea, not a few have deſtroyed their own ſouls, that their children might be great and rich when they were dead: what a pitiful delign is this!

thou ſhalt not rejoice in the grave that thy ſon is rich, neither ſhalt thou grieve for thy ſon that he is poor, when thou ceaſeſt to be among men: for as thy knowledge is periſhed, ſo thy love, thy envy, thy ſorrow are periſhed as to the creature here below. A ſons preferment is nothing to the deceased father, therefore let not fathers venture their conſciences and hazard their ſouls to prefer their children: be not anxiously afraid, that when you are dead your children may be poor, this trouble will never come near your heart when you are dead. God promiſed *Jofiah* (2 Kin. 22. 20.) *I will gather thee unto thy fathers, and thou ſhalt be gathered into thy grave in peace, and thine eyes ſhall not ſee all (that is, not any of) the evil which I will bring upon this place:* As if he had ſaid, I am reſolved as I have decreed, to bring evil upon this place, but it ſhall be no grief to thee, for thou ſhalt firſt be taken out of this place; And when the Prophet *Iſaiab* brought *Hezekiah* a ſad meſſage, *Behold the days come that all that is in thy houſe, and all that thy fathers have laid up in ſtore until this day ſhall be carried to Babylon, and of thy ſons that ſhall iſſue from thee, which thou ſhalt beget, ſhall they take away, and they ſhall be Eunuchs in the palace of the King of Babylon* (Iſa. 39. 6, 7.) Then ſaid *Hezekiah* to *Iſaiab*, good is the word of the Lord, which thou haſt ſpoken: he ſaid moreover, for there ſhall be peace and truth in my days: he ſpeaks not ſlieghtingly of the evils to come; *Hezekiah* was far from the ſpirit of that Roman Emperor, who ſaid, *When I am once dead, let heaven and earth mingle, what care I what becomes of the world when I am once out of it?* *Hezekiah* was not a man of this temper, yet it was ſome abatement of thoſe evils to him, that they ſhould not come till he was paſt feeling them, or being ſenſible of them. The reaſon which the Prophet gives, why God takes good men out of the world ſometimes, is, becauſe he knows a ſtorm is coming, and he would not have them overtaken with it, and therefore he houſes them before it come, *Iſa.* 57. 1, 2. *The righteous periſheth and no man laieth it to heart, and merciful men are taken away, none conſidering that the righteous is taken away from the evil to come: the evil to come is no hurt to them when they are gone.* This is Gods deſign though few conſider it: And as they who are taken away, have no feeling of the evils to come, ſo no fellow-feeling, there is no ſympathy in heaven, Saints are not troubled there at the troubles of any here on earth. It is a grace while we are here, to be troubled at the troubles of others, and it is our pri-

*Ad mortuo
miſceatur igni
ſeiva. Calig.*

priviledge, that in heaven we shall not. The Authour to the Hebrews exhorts us, *to remember those that are in bonds as bound with them, and them that suffer adversity, as being our selves in the body:* (Heb. 13. 2.) 'Tis our being in the body which makes it either a duty or possibility for us to partake in the sufferings of other men.

We may hence confute the popish doctrine and practice of praying to Saints departed. When they are sent away, they know neither our spiritual nor our temporal estate, why then should we pray to them about either? The Saints cannot see from heaven to earth, nor can they hear from heaven to earth, 'tis God whose name is *the God hearing prayers*, and therefore to him *shall all flesh come*: if all flesh are obliged to come to him, where is our warrant to come to Saints departed? and if we doe, where is our hope to receive their help, when they are ignorant that we want help? *though we are made low, they perceive it not.*

A second interpretation tels us, that *Job* speaks not here of a man in the state of death, but of a man about to die, or upon his death-bed: such a mans sons come to honour and he knoweth it not, and then we must expound *knowing* in the second sense, for regarding or being affected with what we know. *Great personal afflictions make us forget all worldly relations, together with the comforts and sorrows which attend them.* A sick man, especially a dying man, takes no pleasure in his life, and is usually so busied with his own pains that he takes little or no notice of the pain or pleasure of others. A man in such a condition can hardly be perswaded to take in spiritual comforts, or to refresh his soul with a taste of that sweet wine, with a morsel of that marrow and fatnesse which the promises of eternal life present unto him, much lesse can he delight himself in sensitive, least of all in sensual objects. Come, and tell him his sons are advanced and his estate thrives, he regards it not, alas (saith he) I am going out of the world, what's all this to me! Mr. Broughtons translation answers this sense with much clearnesse: *Only his flesh is grieved for it self, and his soul will mourn for himself*, as if he had said, his own grief will spend out all his possibilities of grieving, he will have none in store to bestow elsewhere: Our sons are our own flesh and blood, and if any thing would affect a man, it would be to hear of his sons, and if any thing concerning his sons would affect him, to hear of their welfare or affliction would. How do parents rejoyce when their sons come to honour, how are they afflicted when their sons are made low! As
our

our ſons are our own, ſo we reckon upon their good or evil, upon all the occaſions of their joy or ſorrow as our own. Our children are our ſelves multiplied, and (in a ſenſe) immortaliz'd: and love to our children, is but one degree in nature removed from that of our ſelves. Yet a time is coming when our ſons and our daughters about whom we have had ſo many joys and ſorrows, for whom we have laid out ſo many thoughts and cares, even theſe ſhall not have either our joy or ſorrow, our thought or care. It was an argument of the wonderful love of Chriſt, as ſome of the Ancients obſerve upon this place, that when he was nail'd to the croſſe ready to die, he (as it were) forgot his own ſorrows and grievous ſufferings, and remembered his relations (*Joh. 19. 25.*) he ſaid to his mother, *woman, behold thy ſon*, and to the diſciple, *behold thy mother*. Now was *Simeons* prophecy fullfilled upon the bleſſed virgin, *yea, a ſword ſhall pierce thorow thy own ſoul alſo*, *Luk. 2. 35.* And therefore Chriſt applies theſe comfortable words, as a ſalve to her wounds, even while his own were bleeding unto death: *Woman, behold thy ſon, diſciple, behold thy mother*. He calls her *woman*, and not mother, not as unwilling to own her for his mother, but either as fearing that ſuch an owning her, might have created her further trouble, or as ſhewing that being ready to die and return to his father in heaven, he was above earthly relations, and knew none after the fleſh, no not his own mother. And yet though he was not only above, but leaving his mother, he leaves her to the care of his beloved diſciple. And that remembrance which Chriſt at his death expreſſed to his mother, in committing her to a diſciple, the ſame he had expreſſed a little before to all his diſciples, *yea*, and to all beleivers both in committing them to his father when he was gone, and by telling them that he was but gone (as a har-binger) to take up lodgings, and prepare a place for them; aſſuring them alſo that in his abſence he would ſend the ſpirit, who ſhould (with advantage to them) make up the want of his bodily preſence. And laſtly, that himſelf intended to return to them again, he would now ſend one to them, but hereafter he would not ſend a meſſenger for them, but come himſelf, that where he ſhould be there they might be alſo. Was not the love of Chriſt to his children ſtronger then death, when he thus remembered and took care of them; both in the approaches and in the agonies of death? earthly parents may neglect both the *wo* and *welfare* of their children, but Chriſt will not: ſurely he will not do it now, when

when his fleſh upon him is cloathed with glory, and his ſoul within him is filled with joy, for he did not when his fleſh upon him was full of pain, and his ſoul within him did mourn; which is the reaſon or excuſe rather which *Job* gives in the next verſe, why earthly fathers do not ſometimes know their own ſons either in honour or diſgrace.

Verſe 22. *But his fleſh upon him ſhall have pain, and his ſoul within him ſhall mourn.*

They who expound the former verſe of man in the ſtate of death, give the ſame expoſition of this, *his fleſh upon him ſhall have pain, and his ſoul within him ſhall mourn, when he is dead*: But hath a dead man pain? or can he mourn? Death is a total privation of all ſenſitive powers, there's no feeling in the grave. The meaning is either this, he is afflicted while he lives at the thought of what he ſhall be when he is dead: he grieves that worms ſhould eat him, and that his fleſh ſhould corrupt and rot in the earth, What *Job* ſpeaks (*chap. 21. 23.*) in direct oppoſition to this point, is yet a clear proof of this interpretation: *He ſhall be brought to the grave, and remain in the tomb the clods of the valley ſhall be ſweet to him*: Now in the ſame ſenſe that the clods of the valley are ſweet to ſome dead men, they may be ſaid to be painful unto others. Some are very deſirous to die, to ſuch the clods of the valley are ſweet, that is, it pleaſeth them as much to lie in the grave, as to go to a perfumed bed, or to reſt upon a bed of roſes; Others are very unwilling to die, to ſuch the grave is a priſon of darkneſs and aſtoniſhment. Their living fleſh hath pain upon them, while they conſider that their dead fleſh muſt conſume. Or pain and mourning are here aſcribed to dead men; as ſpeech and joy are often in Scripture aſcribed to trees, and ſtones, and cornfields, (lifeleſs inſenſible or irrational creatures, perſonating or taking upon them thoſe actions which are proper unto man) by the figure *Proſopopeia*.

Intelligo per proſopopeiam poſt mortem cum Aben. Ex-ra. Merc.

Secondly, The text may be rendred out of the Hebrew thus, *while his fleſh is upon him, he ſhall have pain, and while his ſoul is within him, he ſhall mourn*, that is, he ſhall be in pain and miſery as long as he lives, eſpecially while he lives (as a ſick man doth) upon the borders and confines of death. The life of man while he lives in health is painful, but when he is ſick and dying he is fuller of pain. *A verum ſuper eo dolebit. Tar.* Then his fleſh upon him hath pain, and his ſoul within mourns, he hath ſorrow without, and ſorrow within, which comprehends all ſorts of

of sorrow : when the flesh is pained and the soul mourns , what can be added to that pain and mourning ? If the spirit be whole it will sustain the infirmities of the body , if the body be whole , it will somewhat allay the infirmities of the minde , but when the flesh is in pain , and the soul mourns , natural misery is compleat : for then all man is in misery. Flesh and spirit , body and soul , are all of man. And in all this *Job* doth not speak his speculation but his experience , He felt what he said , and endured himself what he delivered unto others.

I might here draw out observations about the troubles of mans life , and the quicknesse of his sorrows in the approaches of death. But these points have occurred before , and therefore I shall not renew any discourse upon them in this place.

Thus I have (through the continued help of Christ) finished the commentary of this fourteenth chapter , and of *Jobs* whole answer to the charge of *Zophar* , the last of his three friends , and so of the whole first charge of his three friends , and of his answers to all three. It seems they were all unsatisfied in his answers , as much as they were about his person : and therefore they begin in order as they began. *Eliphaz* leads the battel a second time , and that more fiercely then before , he falls upon *Job* , not so much with stronger arguments as with harder words , rather reproving then arguing with him , and reproving him with much heat , if not with some bitterness of spirit ; As will appear (if the hand of God shall leade us yet further) in publishing the explication of that his second confesse.

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the precedent

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